

**r p m**

issue #2

REVOLUTIONS  
PER  
MINUTE

50p (£1 solidarity price)

*inside the magazine they tried to ban -*  
**holidays in Turkey**  
**-the truth**

**Jeremy Hardy** - *star interview*  
**busted?**  
**top tips!**  
**strikers stories**

*exclusive*  
*exciting* **news-views-advice**



# cheap holidays in other people's misery

Turkey is fast becoming a tourist attraction for workers in Britain looking for a cheap holiday over-

seas, the number of visitors doubling from 314,000 in 1992 to an expected 800,000 in 1996 (figures from Association of British Travel Agents) The Turkish Government is banking on a record number of visitors from around the world in

1997 and Mr Bahattin Yucel, Turkey's minister of tourism, forecasts that the number of visitors will continue to rise above 12 million in the year 2000 from a current 9.5 million.

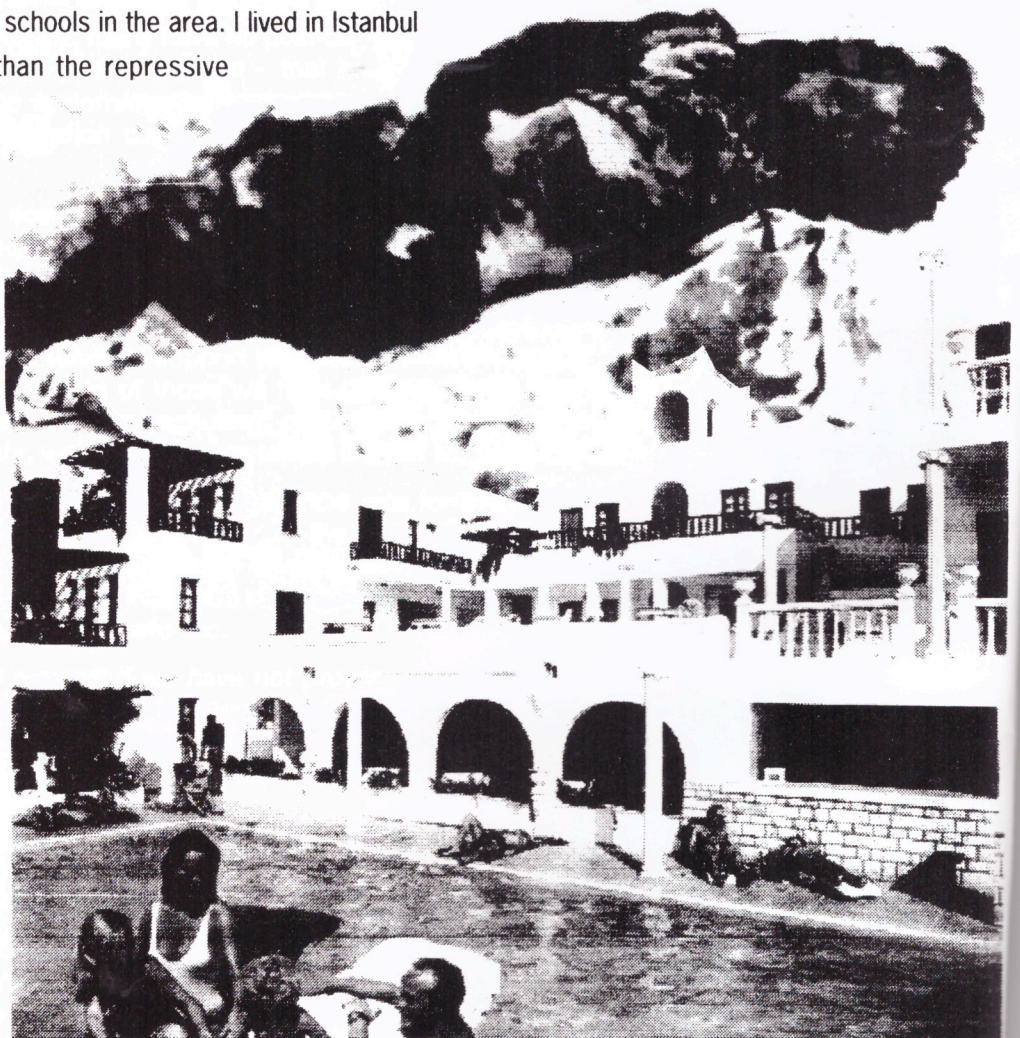
**Turkey - a beautiful country, offers a range of scenery, sunshine and cheap accommodation. The money spent by tourists is used to repress Turkish workers and conduct a campaign of genocide against the Kurds.**

Nariya, a Kurdish woman in her early 20s, fled to Britain four years ago, "People are very poor, they can't send all of their children to school. Sometimes they have two or three jobs. If you're involved in the union then you can lose your job and the police can take you into detention. Many families have got three or four children but they live in one bedroom. They don't have any social life - they can't have, in fact!"

These points are confirmed by 27 year old Mehmet Koras who was born in Elbiston in South East Turkey/Kurdistan, "There was no electricity or running water and no schools in the area. I lived in Istanbul until 1980." Even this was better than the repressive conditions faced by those who remained in Kurdistan, "We left to escape, my father had been killed by the Turkish security forces. There was no particular reason."

Since that time, rather than things getting better they've got worse, as Mehmet says - "Basically there is a dirty civil war in Kurdistan, where even those involved in legal organisations, similar to the British Labour Party, have been killed. HADEP (Democratic Party) is one such organisation, but in addition people allied to human rights organisations have been murdered. People have disappeared and there has been destruction of many villages."

Oguz Sahin left Turkey "for political reasons, I had a link with

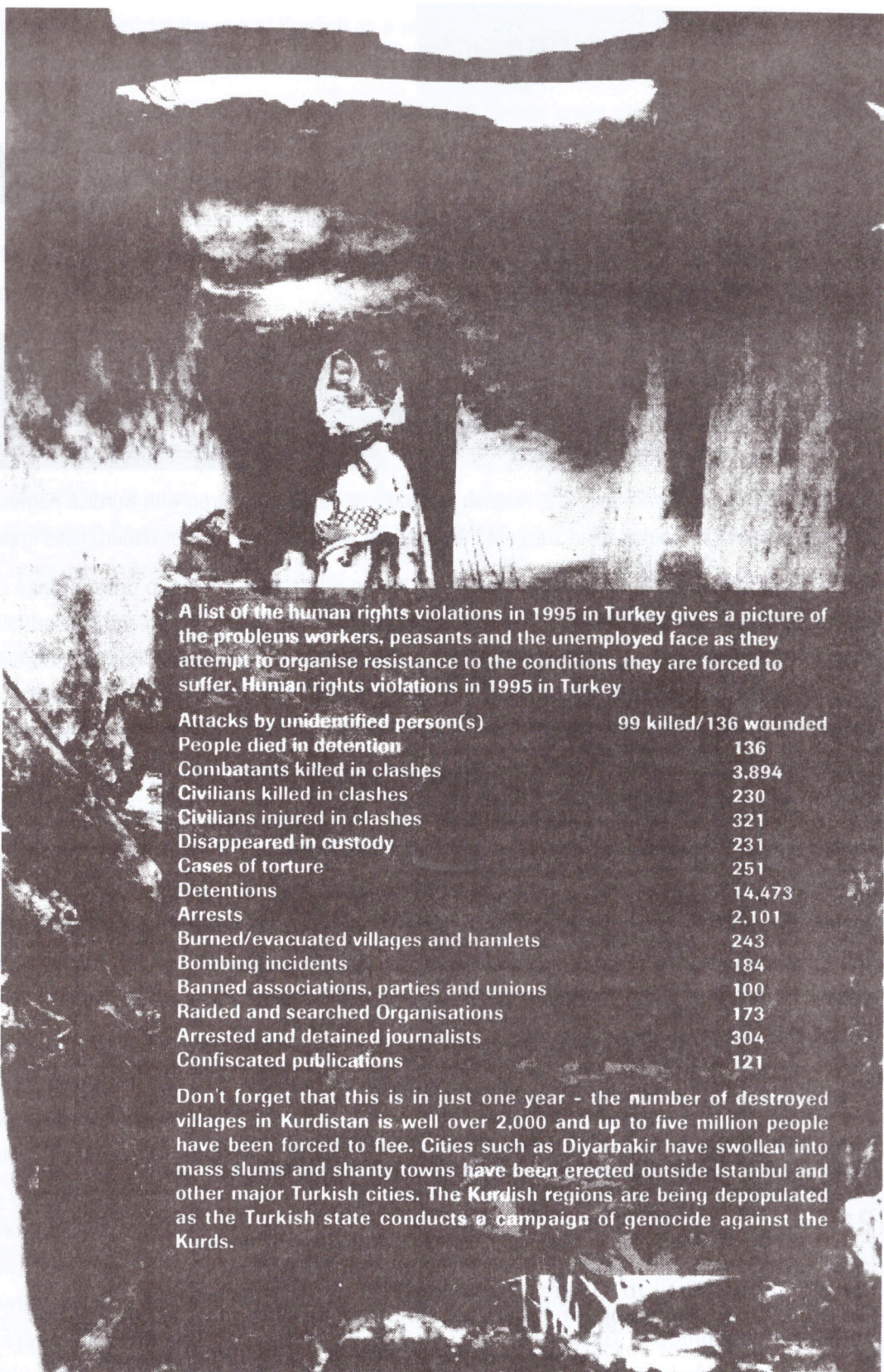




HADEP, this alerted the police and I had to leave... I had witnessed the killing of an elected member of the Turkish parliament, Mehmet Sincar, and my village was destroyed by the Turkish military."

Sibel, a Turkish woman, also fled as "when I was a student I become well known by the police who threatened me. Many times I was arrested. Fascist students attacked and beat me. I came here (Britain) to escape."

It would be a mistake to say that life here in Britain is just as hard, but there are still problems. "Many refugees face a language problem and it takes time to adapt to life abroad. Some people came here because they see it as "a model of democracy". It isn't, the threat of being deported is real, wages in the factories are low and housing is expensive." Mehmet Kora General Secretary of Halkevi Community Centre in Hackney, which has 5,000 members.



A list of the human rights violations in 1995 in Turkey gives a picture of the problems workers, peasants and the unemployed face as they attempt to organise resistance to the conditions they are forced to suffer. Human rights violations in 1995 in Turkey

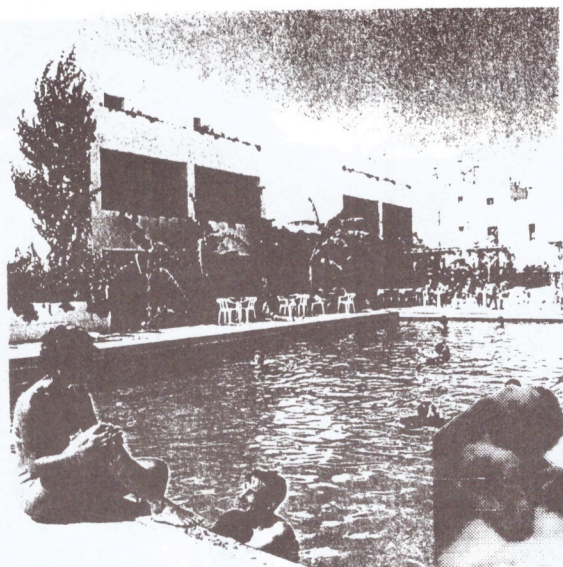
|   |                       |
|---|-----------------------|
| Attacks by unidentified person(s)       | 99 killed/136 wounded |
| People died in detention                | 136                   |
| Combatants killed in clashes            | 3,894                 |
| Civilians killed in clashes             | 230                   |
| Civilians injured in clashes            | 321                   |
| Disappeared in custody                  | 231                   |
| Cases of torture                        | 251                   |
| Detentions                              | 14,473                |
| Arrests                                 | 2,101                 |
| Burned/evacuated villages and hamlets   | 243                   |
| Bombing incidents                       | 184                   |
| Banned associations, parties and unions | 100                   |
| Raided and searched Organisations       | 173                   |
| Arrested and detained journalists       | 304                   |
| Confiscated publications                | 121                   |

Don't forget that this is in just one year - the number of destroyed villages in Kurdistan is well over 2,000 and up to five million people have been forced to flee. Cities such as Diyarbakir have swollen into mass slums and shanty towns have been erected outside Istanbul and other major Turkish cities. The Kurdish regions are being depopulated as the Turkish state conducts a campaign of genocide against the Kurds.

There are 25 million Kurds, but their country is split into four with parts of it in Turkey (where over half the Kurds live), Iran, Iraq and Syria. Responsibility for the division rests mainly with the British and French who, following the First World War, divided the country when the Treaty of Lausanne was signed in November 1922. An earlier Peace Conference, "The Treaty of Sevres" in August 1920, attended by delegates from the defeated Ottoman Empire and Germany, along with the victorious Allied Powers (if you can call the slaughter of millions a victory!) had drawn up plans for an Independent Kurdistan.

Between August 1920 and November 1922 the Turks, under the leadership of Mustafa Kemal, conducted a War of Independence and founded the Turkish Republic. At Lausanne they succeeded in imposing a new treaty on their opponents. The new treaty made no mention of the Kurds, and since 1922 Turkey has striven to maintain that "there is no such thing as a Kurd"





*Turkish soldier  
shows off his  
souvenirs*



only (at best) "mountain Turks". The Kurdish language is banned, children with Kurdish names cannot be registered and to even mention "The Kurds", never mind suggest that they are a separate people or nation, risks imprisonment.

Since 1922 there have been numerous uprisings as the Kurds have striven to drive a range of oppressors from their lands. For example, after the Treaty the Kurds in Iraq rose against the British occupation and this led to the Royal Air Force conducting the first ever bombing campaign against a civilian population, with the RAF carpet-bombing Kurdish towns and villages. This was not to be the last time the British have played a part in suppressing the Kurds. Even today the British Government is one of the staunchest supporters of the Turkish Government, spending billions on arms seeking to increase its share to a country which is now the world's largest importer of arms (for more details see RPM #1)

The latest rebellion, which began amongst young Kurdish intellectuals in the 1970s, developed quickly from 27 November 1978, with the declaration of the founding of the Partiya Karkeren Kurdistan (PKK) - the Workers Party of Kurdistan. The party grew quickly and its successes were one of the reasons that the army in Turkey took power through a coup d'etat on 12 September 1980 (although the major reason was the belief by the employers that they could best restructure the economy by using the army to suppress the organised working class. They used the pretext that a coup was needed because of instability caused by the daily gun battles between the fascists and left-wing organisations, both of which were mainly student based, at the time).

#### Sample resolution for union branches

This branch condemns the Turkish State's brutal repression of the Kurdish people in South East Turkey, and its attacks on trade unions and political parties.

Thousands of Kurds have lost their lives, 3,000 villages have been wiped out and 3 million have lost their homes. EMEK, a new Labour Party in Turkey, is deemed illegal. Torture, disappearances, bombings and murder of those on the left has been all too common in Turkey.

This Branch calls on the NEC of UNISON to:

- ① Publicise to our members (and within the wider Labour movement) the repressive nature of the Turkish Government.
- ② Support a boycott of tourism, which is major prop of the regime. This to include our travel club dropping all dealings with holidays to Turkey.
- ③ To campaign with other Unions to bar arms sales to Turkey.
- ④ Support the Kurds right to self determination.
- ⑤ Sponsor a delegation to the Kurdish regions of Turkey to build links with fellow trade unionists, and report on the latest situation there.

With this coup, all hope of a peaceful solution to the problems of Kurdistan disappeared. So too did any hope of the Turkish masses themselves achieving emancipation by peaceful means. On 15 August 1984 the first Kurdistan Liberation Units, led by the PKK, occupied two small towns and in a prepared statement declared their hope of achieving national and social liberation of the Kurdish people and pointed to their common struggle with the Turkish people's resistance to the army.

In its attempts to suppress the Kurdish people, Turkey is prepared to station 500,000 troops in the area at any one time, employ a system of village guards, develop specialist contra-guerilla units (which carry out hundreds of extra-judiciary killings and "disappearances"), control food supplies, raze villages to the ground and forcibly deport people,



imprison and kill activists, ban trade unions, restrict the use of Kurdish as a written and spoken language and, where everything else fails, simply massacre Kurds of any political allegiance.

This repression has extended into Turkey itself with those involved in political and trade union struggles facing continuous harassment, imprisonments, disappearances and murder. This has not stopped workers organising - May Day struggles have brought thousands into face-to-face revolt with the police and army, writers have continued to speak out, elected MPs have been willing to go to prison for many years to protest at the injustices being waged on Turkish and Kurdish people and prisoners from groups such as the DHKC (Revolutionary People's Liberation Front) were prepared to go on hunger strike to death in 1996 in protest against prison conditions.

Across Europe, Kurds and Turks have marched, campaigned and protested in solidarity with their brothers and sisters in Turkey and Kurdistan. Kurdish activists in particular have requested that British workers (amongst others) refuse to holiday in Turkey. A model resolution for your union branch appears on the previous page - it was passed recently by Hackney UNISON. We appeal to people - **don't holiday in Turkey as every pound you spend helps the Government buy more bullets and bombs.**

More importantly, get involved - contact the Kurdistan Solidarity Committee, 44 Ainger Road, London NW3 3AT (0171 586 5892), the Kurdistan Information Centre, 10 Glass House Yard, London EC1 (0171 250 1315), the Day-Mer Community Centre (0171 275 8440) or the Halkevi Community Centre (0171 249 6980).

Resistance, and before it the groups which combined to form the Colin Roach Centre, have a long record of support for the struggles of Kurdish and Turkish people, both in Britain and abroad. In 1989, when thousands of refugees arrived from Moras in Kurdistan, Hackney Trade Union Support Unit (TUSU) helped set up the Kurdish Refugee Support Group, providing physical, moral, financial and political support to the new arrivals. This was carried out in conjunction with a wide range of community organisations, trade unions and prominent individuals. Hackney TUSU was also one of the first organisations to support the work of activists who established the Day-Mer Community Centre. Further support for refugees arrested during the bitter dispute at Bacton Fashions followed in 1990 and when a Turkish woman joined the project in 1991 a series of employment rights sessions were organised and proved popular.

In 1993 a trade union delegation to Kurdistan, organised with the Kurdistan Solidarity Committee, led to the arrests of all those on it and major publicity about the reality of daily life in the region. Since then, members of the CRC/Resistance have gone as part of other delegations to both Kurdistan and Turkey. The welcome given at all times has been positive and warm.

Further support in struggles to unionise the textile sweatshops here in Britain, opposition to deportations and restrictions on asylum applications can be guaranteed. So too can the developing links between our own organisation and Turkish and Kurdish peoples as we seek to learn from each other.

In addition to supporting a boycott of Turkish tourism, Resistance believes that trade unionists in Britain can best offer support by ensuring that the British Trade Union Movement agrees to support the following:-

- ① Recognition of all trade unions and their right to collective bargaining and rights to strike. The right of an individual to join a union of his/her choice.
- ② An immediate end to repression of Turkish and Kurdish people, including murders, disappearances and intimidation; combined with support for all victims of this repression.
- ③ Unconditional self-determination for the Kurdish people.
- ④ The abolition of the mutual visa charges between Britain and Turkey.
- ⑤ A break of all international links with the fascist trade union, Turk Metal-Is.

## Report from Liverpool Docks striker, Willy Jenkins

I have been out to Turkey twice now. This was after making links with Kurdish workers at JJ Fast Foods here in London and other workers at one of our rallies in Liverpool to get reinstated at Liverpool docks, after 500 of us were sacked for refusing to cross the picket line (see article later in this issue). My latest trip to Turkey in July was for two reasons. I had been invited there by the Emek (Labour) Party, formed in February this year and secondly, I wanted to consolidate with the dock workers we met there. I went there as a trade unionist but I am writing here as a human being who has never witnessed anything in my life like this.

On the Saturday morning at 12 pm the mothers and relatives, mostly women, of all the "disappeared" people came together on a main road in the centre of Istanbul. There were tanks and hundreds and hundreds of police on the roof tops with their guns out. In the four weeks prior to this the police had not let the women speak. This time the authorities allowed them to speak and sit down for



just five minutes before violently moving them on.

On our second day there was a demonstration by the children of the "disappeared" - about 30 children wearing white t-shirts bearing the names of their "disappeared" relatives. They were accompanied by five women, two of them elderly. Emek told us not to take part in the demonstration but just to walk down and witness it. After 5-10 minutes and about fifty yards before the procession reached the ministry building where they were going to demonstrate, the Special Police (plain-clothed people with batons) came out and kicked and battered those children and women. They dragged the old women by the hair and threw them into the back of police vans. Photographers and cameramen were all assaulted and battered. From the side of the street where I was, the police came running up and it was only out of luck that we did not get hit. They were just hitting and battering everybody. I had to stand there and watch helplessly as women and children were violently beaten ... Since I have come back I have noticed there is nothing in the press. I have never been to Turkey on holiday but my family holiday there - certainly never again! Or any of my friends. I appeal for this everywhere I speak!

There was also an invitation for ourselves and delegations from Germany and France to go to the South-East, to Gaziantep (actually in Kurdistan), where 20,000 textile workers had been on strike for the past month. It was a pleasure for me to go and to give those workers the solidarity and support of the Liverpool dockers. Unfortunately we arrived there to find about 8,000 of the workers completely blocked in on all sides by police with shields, in all the little side streets around. When representatives of the workers appeared the police prevented them from speaking. People managed to hold the police off briefly to allow me to speak but unfortunately I managed only to say I was from Liverpool, there to give them solidarity and support on behalf of 500 workers. Once this was interpreted all hell broke loose.

I have never before witnessed so much brutality and force, applied all around me by those policemen, all of them special-clothed police. They did not touch me - they just dragged me backwards and got the microphone from me - but all around me they battered and broke the bones of these workers. I actually saw four policemen beating one young man until two of their batons broke. One of the policemen, with only a little stump of his baton left, looked round and, not finding a stone, took his shoe off and used the heel to continue beating the young man's head. This was all around me.

Bearing witness to this but being so helpless shocked me and hurt me so much as a human being that as soon as I came home our support group formed a campaign for human rights in Turkey. I went to every local Liverpool MP and have been in touch with all the Labour MEPs. We have got every dock worker from all round the world to support it. People like Ken Loach and Harold Pinter have put their names to it. It is just so important that people know. The thousands of people in Britain who holiday there must have a conscience, once they know what is happening in Kurdistan and Turkey.

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If you can get involved in any of the work reported in this magazine or would like more information please contact the Colin Roach Centre on 0181-533 7111 or return this form to CRC, 56 Clarence Road, London E5 8HB.

Name.....

Address.....

Telephone.....

I would like information on.....



# RPM and the Colin Roach Centre

by Mark Metcalf



Readers of RPM will have some idea, from both this issue and number 1, of how the Colin Roach Centre operates and why we are so keen to see similar centres established elsewhere (preferably under the banner of Resistance, but this won't always be the case).

For example, readers will have seen in the first issue a leaflet which we distribute about stop and search whereby we encourage people, especially the young, to let us know when this happens – even if they're not arrested. This basic information allows us to monitor the police, it lets us know what's happening locally and means when we speak publicly we can do so with authority. In other words we can challenge part of the local State (i.e. the police) because we have the knowledge and information to do so. We thus compete for the ideological space which they occupy.

In this issue there's a practical guide to fighting the police once someone's been charged including an example of why and how to undertake a witness search, which is absolutely vital to any person's defence. However, policing isn't the only area of work. On

## *How the Colin Roach Centre can make a difference*

As a railworker I have found the Colin Roach Centre (CRC) both inspirational in its politics of empowering people and of great practical help when disputes arise. Unlike most of the left, the Colin Roach Centre does not come along to workers in struggle with a political dogma and a preconceived recipe for success. Instead it gives workers the advice, help and facilities to organise their own disputes, independent if necessary, of trade union bureaucracies.

Two particular occasions spring to mind where CRC intervention helped bring about spectacular victories. The first of these was when management at Euston Station attempted to force workers to work night shifts with faulty lighting and inadequate staff!

Using CRC resources, I immediately produced a leaflet alerting other railworkers to this situation. As a result Euston staff refused to go on track for 3 weeks, eventually winning all their claims. Not only did the CRC members provide me with transport, they also came to my workplace in support of the action. The swift distribution of information was essential to the winning of this dispute and CRC contacts allowed this to be done effectively.

The other instance where the CRC intervened had national repercussions. The British Rail Telecomms department voted to strike against the 3% pay rise offered by management. The Telecomms action would have had a minimal effect on disrupting trains. Other rail workers, supported by CRC members, decided to picket out Euston signalling box. This would breach anti-trade union laws, but of equal importance, disrupt the profitable intercity services from Euston. Hearing of the potential damage, management made major concessions to telecomms staff including cash bonus payments. All this shows that rank and file workers who are prepared to act independently of trade union bureaucracies can take on the employers and win. Organisations like the CRC are essential if disputes like this are going to succeed.

Steve, RMT shop steward – taken from 'A Case for Trade Union Rank and File Resistance' printed by the CRC in 1995 (and still available at £1.50 a copy plus 39 p postage).

a day to day basis there's also unemployed people calling in to ask whether we can help them in making an appeal against a decision to suspend or cut their benefit, local people wanting assistance to get housing repairs carried out or a transfer from their current accommodation, people facing deportation asking for a letter to the Home Office to be typed, a worker who's just lost his/her job and wants to make an industrial tribunal application or even a picket of his/her workplace.

With some people, fewer but a

★  
resistance



growing number, they want to come in and discuss what's happening politically. In recent weeks we've had people coming through the door to buy RPM, to drop leaflets in for others to collect and to take away an increasing range of free information – such as What to do when stopped by the police, How to survive a restart interview, job seekers allowance information and a whole lot more...

Based on a working class estate, the Pembury in Hackney, the centre at 56 Clarence Road has now been open about 18 months (it moved from a larger but less well-used place in another part of Hackney in April 1995) and is a very well-used local advice centre, with a definite campaigning base.

The benefits of having a centre is that you're seen, your visible, you're not just a paper-seller, you're part of the community and with patience it's possible to build up an established relationship with many people who would otherwise never come into contact with 'people who want to change the world.' We believe that the benefits of having such a centre far outweigh the negatives but it's hard work keeping it open, funded and working in the interests of local people whilst at the same time not forgetting that it all fits in to the general struggle for a world significantly different to what the mass of people have got today.

### *Everyone can play a part in organising Resistance*

*I've been asked to write a few lines on why I come to the Centre once a week and work in near (sub?) Dickensian conditions, for which anywhere else we would be urging "action".*

*For I start, I do it for selfish reasons... for one day a week I get away from over-comfortable, privileged, smug, middle class North West London. The contrast with Hackney is stark and salutary. Most people I am in contact with believe, for instance, that the police are doing a great job and, with very few exceptions, should be commended. It is satisfying to be able to dent their complacency, if only temporarily, by making them read some of our literature.*

*All my family have their roots in the East End. My grandparents, immigrants from Poland, lived in the Commercial Road, and one aunt, until comparatively recently, lived in Cable Street and then in a high rise in Jamaica Street. A great aunt, in the late 1930s, and she over 60, led a march in the East End waving a red flag. Uncles and cousins had been involved in the Garment Workers trade union. So, it wasn't always leafy suburbia.*

*I have never had a doubt that the only reasonable way to run a society is on communist principles. Communist cousins "indoctrinated" me at the early age of about 14 and nothing since then has persuaded me of the wrongness of those early views.*

*If I can help, in however small a way, I am more than happy to put up with poor equipment, no hot water, grotty kitchen, bad lighting, inadequate heating etc.*

*Lila*

## Central London Branch of Resistance established

It is with pleasure that RPM can report that the initial meetings of the Central London Branch of Resistance have attracted healthy attendances. Fifteen people came along to the second meeting including building workers, a steward from the rail industry, manual workers from a college, Asian workers, housing workers from a homeless project along with others possessing a wealth of experience in anti-racist and anti-imperialist campaigns, trade unions and workplace struggles. Apologies were received from others who couldn't attend on the evening, including youths from the Bengali Community who were unwilling to come to a meeting in a pub (consequently the next meetings have been moved to a more appropriate venue).

A programme of activities is being worked out, a telephone line has been installed into an office we've got the use of in South London (0181 540 6280) and plans for recruitment are being put into place. Finance is available to develop the branch, the intention being to eventually create branches in as many localities as possible.

Meanwhile we've received enquiries from around the country about what we're doing as well as from Germany. We're willing to come along to any meetings, so let us know if you require a speaker and/or information.

**In recent months we have become aware of our post being interfered with. Letters within the UK haven't arrived or in some cases arrived after being opened. Our phone lines have been cutting out. Some members have found messages on their private answerphones which belong to other people. It's all a bit worrying. More importantly we'd like to know if you have sent a letter or cheque to us in recent months and not received a reply. It's probably best to phone on 0181 533 7111 or fax on 0181 533 7116.**

We welcome letters, although they may be edited (for reasons of space only).

If you require this magazine on audio cassette please contact the CRC.

*An RPM reader's group is being set up in the near future. For more information or to make contributions to the next issue please contact the CRC.*

The views expressed in this magazine are those of the contributor and not necessarily those of the CRC/Resistance.

Editorial committee – M. Cassidy, Angela Sibley, Mark Metcalf, Rachel Burns, Neil Warne.

# resistance



# busted!

In the last copy of RPM, we published a "what to do if you get stopped by the police" leaflet for display on noticeboards. In this issue we take a brief look at what to do if you're actually arrested and charged. Typical of the cases that Resistance members deal with on a day to day

basis at the Colin Roach Centre in Hackney is where someone is stopped by the police, arrested and during detention they are the victims of an assault by the police either verbally and/or physically. To add insult to injury they then find that they're charged with some spurious

offence, often assault on a police officer.

Most people come to us in a state of shock - the majority of people genuinely want to believe that the police are "doing a good job" and the police remain in public opinion polls amongst the most highly thought of public service

(although polls conducted in various local areas indicate that the police are not, in the least popular and amongst some communities they are positively hated. Hackney is just one such community). There is shock at being charged when it's actually the police who have carried out

a crime (e.g. the assault.).

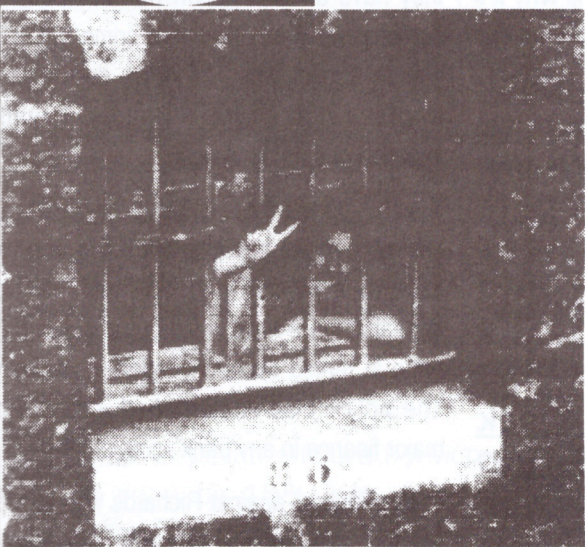
The police charge people because it helps to deflect attention away from their own crimes.

They know that before the person can do anything about the assault they have undergone they need to defend themselves against the charges they've been landed with. Most people can't, at least initially, make sense of what's happened. **However its immediately after what's happened that the work needed to ensure a "not guilty" verdict (either in court or forcing the Crown Prosecution Service to drop the charges) must begin.**

At this point it should be noted that in order to ensure that a case proceeds to court the police often reduce the original charges, which would have been heard in front of a jury, to a "minor" charge whereby the arrested person is forced to undergo a trial in a magistrates court (where it is significantly more difficult to obtain a not guilty verdict).

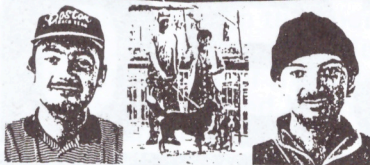
We would advise the following -

- Try to write down everything that happened as soon as possible. Get a friend to help if you can't do it yourself.
- If you have been injured then go and see your doctor and make sure s/he records all your injuries. Tell them what happened. Get photographs of all your injuries.
- Get a decent solicitor, ask if they do prosecution work on behalf of the police and if they do then don't use them. **Do not use the duty solicitor, even if they were helpful when you were arrested.** You can change solicitors but its best to do this as soon as possible. Contact the Colin Roach Centre if you want to know a solicitor in your area.
- You can (and should) get your solicitor to make a formal complaint about what's happened. Do not speak to the police about the complaint yourself and make it clear that you do not wish to be interviewed before your case is completed as any





## urgent appeal for witnesses



Just before noon on Friday October 4th, outside St Leonards Hospital in Kingsland Road, police arrested two young men who at the time had with them their family's pet dog, "Pink" (shown above).

Both young men were attacked without warning by a number of police officers, who subjected them to a tirade of anti-Irish abuse whilst kicking and punching them. "Pink", their family's pet, was beaten over its spine with long-handled batons and is now believed to be dead.

In order to cover up their own crimes, the police officers from Shoreditch police station have now charged the two young men with a number of serious offences.

Witnesses are urgently needed to help in the defence of two innocent men. Please contact us if you can help

Colin Roach Centre  
56 Clarence Road E5  
0181 - 533 7111

FIGHTING POLICE CRIME



statement you give to the police will only involve revealing your case to them before you go to court!

→ Make sure you get the names and addresses of all the people you know witnessed what happened.

→ Carry out a witness search - very few people are arrested without someone seeing what's happened. Leaflets can be produced cheaply and handed out at the place where you were arrested. Try and go at the same time in the day when the incident took place. Leaflet nearby estates and make sure that there is a contact number on the leaflets. As an example see the leaflet above.

→ When you go to court take as many friends as possible. Make sure that they are well dressed - appearances count. **These are not "people's courts" they're places where police officers are generally believed, especially in the magistrates courts.**

→ Consider setting up a campaign, (which we will cover in a future edition) but be careful as it can alert the police to the fact that you're going to oppose their attempts to criminalise you and

they will consequently work harder to ensure you're convicted. Often the element of surprise at court is better than a campaign. In any campaign make sure you don't reveal the main evidence and make sure you work in conjunction with the solicitors. Contact RPM on 0181 533 7111 and we can discuss with you the strengths and weaknesses of campaigning.

→ Try and find out if the officers involved in your arrest are known to have carried out similar activities. It may be that they did something similar before and ended up losing the case, if so then let your solicitor know. It can be used in your case.

→ Whether you win (and our aim is always to win, we never put "politics" before winning as there's nothing so important and pleasing as taking on the police and winning!) or lose the case, you can still consider suing in a civil court for the appropriate offence. You will need a specialist solicitor, so contact us for help. Civil courts decide these matters on the balance of probabilities and not beyond all reasonable doubt as they do in criminal cases, which is why it's important to look at the civil remedy.

**If you're unlucky enough to get sent to prison then there are various prisoners support campaigns which you could contact. Amongst the best are probably -**

**London Anarchist Black Cross, c/o 121 Railton Road, London SE24 0LR**

**Fight Racism! Fight Imperialism! BCM Box 5909, London WC1N 3XX, 0171 837 1688**

## free phylip richards

The first issue of RPM featured a letter from Carly, the wife of Phylip Richards, thanking the Colin Roach Centre for its help. Since then it has been decided to launch the "Free Phylip Richards" campaign which will include a lobby of the Court of Appeal, petitions and pickets of Stoke Newington Police Station.

Phylip Richards was convicted of "conspiracy to supply a Class 'A' drug" and was sentenced to 8 years in prison in May 1996. He is appealing against his conviction. Prior to his conviction Phylip Richards, aged 47, had only one previous minor conviction. At his trial this year the local priest gave evidence of his integrity. A married man, he has 3 children, the youngest seven years of age.

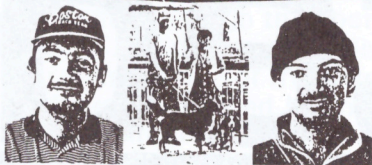
Richards was arrested by the (in)famous Stoke Newington Drugs Squad. By charging him with conspiracy it was easier to convict him. For a conspiracy charge to be 'proved', all the police have to do is either show that the person intended to do something or that they have an association with someone or some persons involved in a crime, i.e. it is guilt by association. The police do not have to prove that Phylip Richards actually supplied or sold the drugs!

It was claimed that Richards made lots of money from his activities but if this was the case then himself and his family do not appear to have led the life of the super rich, living in rented accommodation in Hackney. The police also couldn't find a record of major finance in any bank account.

The 'evidence' against Richards was almost entirely based on the statements of Deborah Wanda Knight, otherwise known as Jean Harvey. She turned Queen's evidence, pleaded guilty and implicated Richards in the drugs conspiracy. She got a 2 year



## urgent appeal for witnesses



Just before noon on Friday October 4th, outside St Leonards Hospital in Kingsland Road, police arrested two young men who at the time had with them their family's pet dog, "Pink" (shown above).

Both young men were attacked without warning by a number of police officers, who subjected them to a tirade of anti-Irish abuse whilst kicking and punching them. "Pink", their family's pet, was beaten over its spine with long-handled batons and is now believed to be dead.

In order to cover up their own crimes, the police officers from Shoreditch police station have now charged the two young men with a number of serious offences.

Witnesses are urgently needed to help in the defence of two innocent men. Please contact us if you can help

Colin Roach Centre  
56 Clarence Road E5  
0181 - 533 7111

FIGHTING POLICE CRIME



statement you give to the police will only involve revealing your case to them before you go to court!

→ Make sure you get the names and addresses of all the people you know witnessed what happened.

→ Carry out a witness search - very few people are arrested without someone seeing what's happened. Leaflets can be produced cheaply and handed out at the place where you were arrested. Try and go at the same time in the day when the incident took place. Leaflet nearby estates and make sure that there is a contact number on the leaflets. As an example see the leaflet above.

→ When you go to court take as many friends as possible. Make sure that they are well dressed - appearances count. **These are not "people's courts" they're places where police officers are generally believed, especially in the magistrates courts.**

→ Consider setting up a campaign, (which we will cover in a future edition) but be careful as it can alert the police to the fact that you're going to oppose their attempts to criminalise you and

they will consequently work harder to ensure you're convicted. Often the element of surprise at court is better than a campaign. In any campaign make sure you don't reveal the main evidence and make sure you work in conjunction with the solicitors. Contact RPM on 0181 533 7111 and we can discuss with you the strengths and weaknesses of campaigning.

→ Try and find out if the officers involved in your arrest are known to have carried out similar activities. It may be that they did something similar before and ended up losing the case, if so then let your solicitor know. It can be used in your case.

→ Whether you win (and our aim is always to win, we never put "politics" before winning as there's nothing so important and pleasing as taking on the police and winning!) or lose the case, you can still consider suing in a civil court for the appropriate offence. You will need a specialist solicitor, so contact us for help. Civil courts decide these matters on the balance of probabilities and not beyond all reasonable doubt as they do in criminal cases, which is why it's important to look at the civil remedy.

**If you're unlucky enough to get sent to prison then there are various prisoners support campaigns which you could contact. Amongst the best are probably -**

**London Anarchist Black Cross, c/o 121 Railton Road, London SE24 0LR**

**Fight Racism! Fight Imperialism! BCM Box 5909, London WC1N 3XX, 0171 837 1688**

## free phylip richards

The first issue of RPM featured a letter from Carly, the wife of Phylip Richards, thanking the Colin Roach Centre for its help. Since then it has been decided to launch the "Free Phylip Richards" campaign which will include a lobby of the Court of Appeal, petitions and pickets of Stoke Newington Police Station.

Phylip Richards was convicted of "conspiracy to supply a Class 'A' drug" and was sentenced to 8 years in prison in May 1996. He is appealing against his conviction. Prior to his conviction Phylip Richards, aged 47, had only one previous minor conviction. At his trial this year the local priest gave evidence of his integrity. A married man, he has 3 children, the youngest seven years of age.

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*Phylip and Carly  
with their  
children*

**cop  
watch**

# F M A L C O L M E K E N N E D Y - J U S T I C E F O R P A T R I C K Q U I N N C A M P A I G N

sentence. Knight/Harvey is a habitual criminal who clearly lied to save 'her skin'.

There were many irregularities in the police's case including the fact that they did not carry out agreed procedures when handling drugs they had recovered on a raid. There was also concern at the conduct of Judge King who handled the trial. He constantly interrupted Richards defence counsel, making his defence almost impossible. He clearly acted unfairly in his directions to the jury at the end of the trial.

The Colin Roach Centre is supporting the 'Free Phylip Richards' Campaign. We recognise that he won't find it easy to win his appeal, because despite our work in previous years in exposing Stoke Newington Police's involvement in drug trafficking, corruption and the fitting up of innocent victims, the result has been to make the police even more secretive and less easy to expose than before.

We appeal to anyone reading this who may have any information which can help Phylip Richards to contact us. We also need to hear from other people fitted-up by Stoke Newington Drugs Squad – all information will be treated confidentially. We already have quite a lot of information.

Finally, if you would like a speaker from the Phylip Richards campaign then contact the Colin Roach Centre, 56 Clarence Road, E5 on 0181-533 7111.

The number of police officers convicted of criminal offences rose by 15% last year, according to Home Office figures. The number of deaths in custody also rose to 50, from 39 the previous year. The number of officers found guilty of disciplinary offences rose from 390 to 410.

The case of Malcolm Kennedy and Patrick Quinn must rank among the most worrying of the many miscarriages of British justice. It involves not only the conviction of an innocent man but also the so far successful cover-up of a murder committed by police officers. Kennedy from Hackney, a middle aged slightly-built man with no history of violence, was arrested for drunkenness in the early hours of Christmas Eve 1990. He was taken to Hammersmith Police station and locked in a cell where he fell asleep. Patrick Quinn (from Donegal in Ireland) also arrested for being drunk, ended up in the same cell.

Kennedy was woken up by a struggle in the cell, between a police officer and Quinn. He tried to intervene but was punched unconscious. Later he was woken up by 3 policemen in the cell. Patrick's body was on the floor, all but one of his ribs smashed, his heart and spleen crushed, his face pulped. **The 3 officers told Malcolm "you did this."**

The police investigation into Quinn's death was either utterly incompetent or not an investigation at all, but an attempt to conceal the factors. Officers had (and took) the opportunity to clean the uniforms they were supposed to hand over for forensic tests, the log book showing who visited the cell was "lost" (just one of several vital documents which have disappeared). Procedures for calling in the Police Complaints Authority and pathologist were not followed.

It was only after Malcolm was convicted of murder and sentenced to life in mid 1991, that the police case started to unravel. A World in Action investigation found that the time of another arrest had been altered in order to get 2 officers – Emlyn Welch and Paul Giles – out of the station at the time Quinn died, and the more the paperwork (that is the paperwork that hadn't been mysteriously "lost") was examined the more it looked like the officers were lying about the whole course of events that night.

The case went back to the Court of Appeal on 11.2.93 which ordered a retrial so as the jury could hear all the evidence. At the Court of Appeal PC Welsh revealed that he had conveniently "found" his "lost" notebook; he'd had it in a wallet stuck behind his new pocketbook and had carried it



around for months without knowing! Unfortunately for PC Welsh when he was asked to show where he'd had the notebook, he couldn't fit it back in the wallet.

When Malcolm's re-trial started (on 8.9.93) it looked as though he had a good chance of being acquitted. It looked even better when PC Giles started his evidence. It not only became obvious that he was tangled up in a hopeless web of lies, but it seemed possible that he would give up and name Quinn's real murderer(s). Then a policeman sitting in court as Exhibits Officer, suddenly found a vital piece of missing evidence as he flicked through a file.

*Despite the fact that 3 separate investigations had searched that file for that piece of evidence, and not found it, the Judge refused to accept that this was a blatant forgery and the trial had to be abandoned.*

Just before the new trial began (on 26.2.94) the Prosecution announced that PC Giles had gone mad and could not give evidence. It has since emerged that Giles' "madness" is only brought on by being asked questions about the death of Patrick Quinn! The trial ended on 6.5.94 with the jury, under pressure from the Judge, finding Malcolm guilty of the compromise charge of Manslaughter. The Judge sentenced him to 9 years imprisonment.

After over two years solid campaigning and an Early Day Motion signed by 65 MPs, Malcolm's Appeal was heard on 2nd July 1996. His appeal grounds were :

✚ that the trial judge wrongly exercised his discretion by deciding that PC Giles was medically unfit to give evidence and allowing transcripts of his evidence in previous hearings to be read out in open court.

✚ that it was an abuse of process for the second re-trial to continue without

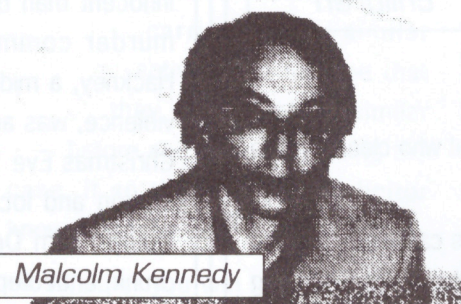
## cop watch

PC Giles giving evidence.

Prior to the Appeal there had been three

dramatic developments :

① the reason given for PC Giles non-appearance at the second re-trial was that he would suffer irreparable mental damage. Kennedy's defence counsel, Michael Mansfield QC, argued that Giles



was deceiving Crown psychiatrists. Events appear to have proved him right. Giles is now proceeding with a libel claim against Granada Television's World in Action documentary programme and he will be giving evidence in those proceedings.

② Kennedy's first re-trial was abandoned after the discovery of a 'missing' computer print out. The Crown maintained that the document could not be forged, and it was of major significance in the second re-trial. However, prior to the final appeal, the police conceded forgery is possible.

③ A communications expert has examined the reliability of reading out Giles' evidence in the second re-trial. He concludes that the reading "posed superhuman mental demands upon the jury" and they were consequently unable to form an accurate judgement on his reliability and truthfulness as a witness.

On Tuesday 16th July 1996 Malcolm's appeal against Manslaughter was lost. The 3 High Court Judges would not accept any of the grounds put forward by Mike Mansfield QC, Malcolm's

barrister, and would not accept that Malcolm had not had a fair trial even though PC Giles was absent.

Malcolm will now take his case to the European Court of Human Rights.

In this case we have two victims of police crime. Patrick Quinn suffered a brutal death, his injuries included 33 fractured ribs, crushed heart and larynx - and Malcolm Kennedy has been falsely convicted of a crime he did not commit. The Quinn and Kennedy families have also suffered greatly. Patrick Quinn's family, who wish to see justice done, have attended the Old Bailey on 3 separate occasions and have had to sit and watch police officers squirm in the witness box. They are still none the wiser as to who was responsible for their brother's death. Kennedy's father and aunt have been interrogated by prison officers about what happened that night, causing them much stress.

Over the past 5 years it has become common knowledge that police officers commit crimes. In the past year 2 separate juries have reached unlawful killing verdicts following the deaths of Richard O'Brien and Shiji Lapite in police custody.

The Campaign goes on - **MALCOLM KENNEDY IS DETERMINED TO CLEAR HIS NAME AND THERE MUST BE JUSTICE FOR PATRICK QUINN AND HIS FAMILY.**

Contact the Colin Roach Centre for further details.

### The Stoke Newington Scandal continues

In the last issue, we reported that six officers from Stoke Newington police station had been charged with assault, unlawful imprisonment and conspiracy to pervert the course of justice. Since then, two further charges have now been brought regarding the same incidents - PC Paul Evans faces charges of assault, ABH, false imprisonment and perverting the course of justice. PC Emma Flannigan also faces a charge of conspiracy to pervert the course of justice.

All the accused are due in court on December 10th.



# Jeremy Hardy speaks

star  
interview

Neil Bradley talks to Jeremy Hardy, comedian, Guardian columnist and star of R4's "News Quiz", "Jeremy Hardy Speaks to the Nation" and Channel 4's "Jack and Jeremy's Real Lives" (with Jack Dee)

I met up with Jeremy Hardy shortly after he'd left the stage to rapturous applause at a benefit for CND in central London. From south London, he's been doing stand-up comedy for 13 years, originally taking to the stage when his writing wasn't earning enough. His act (and writing) are very political, although he says he sees his job more as giving heart to people who are "on his side," rather than trying to convert people. "It's much harder to do political stuff on the comedy circuit now, people are educated by TV, people want quick gags, jokes about football and drugs!" he says, in comparison to the comedy scene when he started out.

But he's not convinced by the "Thatcher's Children" attitude – "I think it's a bit of a cop-out really, to just say, 'Young people are all just shite, they're not worth bothering about,' I grew up in the 60's and 70's, but they were pretty bad Labour Governments then – Wilson and Callaghan, it wasn't the heyday of Socialism! So the idea that there's been this enormous seachange... The worst thing that's happened is that the Labour Party has abandoned any commitment to the Labour Movement, and all the cuts in the NHS and education were started by the 74-79 Labour Government, which was brought in by the miners and kicked out by the whole union movement. But they did what they've always done – get in on the back of mass anger and then turn round and shit on us!"

Coming from a Leftish-liberal family he decided at an early age that he was a Socialist, "My mum was more Left-wing than my father. I think I was probably nine when I asked my mum what the difference was between Labour and the Tories. She said, "Well Conservatives believe that if a man has a lake, he should charge everybody that swims in the lake – Labour believe that everybody should own the lake and everyone can swim in it for free!" I thought that sounded much better, but sadly gave Labour a lot more credibility than they deserved!"

I asked Jeremy if he had any political or comedy heroes, but although he said that there were people he admired, he doesn't really believe in heroes, "I don't believe in idolatry, I think that's always been a problem on the Left, investing too much in individuals. Even as a comedian, it worries me that people are so into the idea that comedy can solve the problem. It worries me that people see satire as an attack on the Establishment, when more than anything it acts as a safety valve for the Establishment."

At the time of our interview the Wayne Douglas Inquest was going on. Jeremy thought that the issue of deaths in police custody was one area where it seems no progress has been made at all, "People have accepted the idea that there are miscarriages of justice, innocent people go to prison, the police maliciously prosecute and frame people, but they haven't accepted the idea that the police kill people." He revealed that his grandfather's brother had died in police custody in the 40's – "He fell off a bar stool and banged his head, was arrested for being drunk and put in a police cell. The next morning he was found dead, he'd died of a brain haemorrhage. He wasn't battered to death, it was just lack of care, but it's just an area that hasn't advanced."

***"Labour – not so much a Party as a few people round for dinner!"***

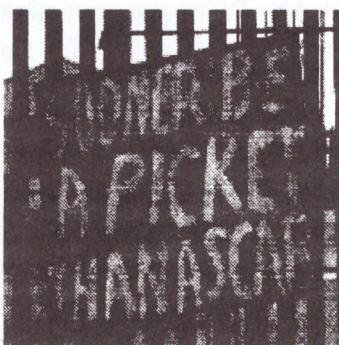
Jeremy's political work mainly revolves around miscarriages of justice, work which started when he was involved in the Birmingham 6 case. "I go to meetings, write letters, write articles, go on vigils, go on visits, all of that." He lost his previous job writing for the Guardian because he forgot to write it one week! With his new column being one of the few places for entertaining Left politics to get into the media, I hope he doesn't forget to keep writing this one! Thanks for the interview.





# liverpool + do

Liverpool dockers have been on strike since 28 September 1995 when 500 of them were sacked after refusing to cross a picket line. In August 1995 dockers from the Torside Company voted to take industrial action. They began picketing Liverpool Docks and workers from companies predominantly controlled by the Mersey Docks and Harbour Company refused to cross the picket line. They were all dismissed. Since then the dockers have waged a struggle for reinstatement on their previous terms and conditions.



RPM had an opportunity to interview Mick Tighe, 28 years a Liverpool docker, and Nick Silvano (a youngster with only 25 years as a Liverpool docker!). Nick originally began as a docker for the West Coast Stevedore Company with Mick employed directly by the Dock Labour Board. Nick said "Over the years all the companies merged; the West Coast Stevedore Company released their licence but all the workers retained their jobs by transferring to the Mersey Harbour Docks Company. This happened to many workers. Nevertheless, the scale of job losses has been horrific – it's down from 15,000 when I started to only 200 ex-registered dock workers. These workers plus the 300 from the union ACTSS (the white collar section of the Transport and General Workers Union) and the Torside Dockers make up the 500 who were dismissed."

## why are you on strike?

The two dockers replied: "To fight against casualisation in the Port of Liverpool, to defend young workers' jobs and because we refused to cross a picket line, thus defending basic trade union principles. You never cross a picket line. It's as simple as that."

## how does this strike affect you and your family?

Mick replied: "Economic fear is placed on yourself and your family. Most people are in arrears with their mortgages. Your children are deprived of holidays and other benefits which they enjoyed when you're in full-time work. New uniforms

for school are out. It puts a great strain on Christmas coming on because even children at this time of year." Nick said: "The dispute around 100 workers are repossessed. Naturally we are going on strike, the other side of being on strike is the great feeling of solidarity. We still all meet on a daily basis on the picket line and there is great pride in having fought for our principles. It has made us stronger as individuals and the comradeship after 14 months is stronger than ever. Whereas we worked with people before, we have lived with them during the strike, a very strong bond has been formed between the families involved."

## have you received support from unionists?

"Yes, but it's been mainly financial support by the anti-trade union laws, which have tremendous links with fellow trade unionists donated to our Hardship Fund on various occasions."

## what about the future? How have things changed?

"This leaves a lot to be desired. There have been four different forces. The



# ck strike

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other trade

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been involved since day one. In fact there  
s the Port Police, the Merseyside Police,

the mounted police with dog handlers and the recently formed Operation Support Division (OSD). The last lot come dressed like Robo-cops. They are the thugs of the police operation. The relationship with the Port Police hasn't been too bad. It's when the OSDs turn up, their role is to break any demonstration. During our anniversary weekend we witnessed some really ugly scenes. The OSDs really 'worked out' the people from Reclaim the Streets who came along to support us. In the case of one lad they chucked him into Lancaster Prison for the weekend."

One thing which we did not touch upon in the interview was the role of the TGWU bureaucracy. All the dockers are in the T&G but despite this the union has refused to make the dispute official for fear of falling foul of the anti-trade union laws. This has meant the dockers' case has not got to as many people as it should have. More importantly, it has meant that other workers who may have been prepared to take solidarity action have not been able to do so.

It was great to talk to Mick and Nick. The Liverpool Dockers' case is a just and deserving one. They need financial support and if you can get up to the picket line then do so.

Contact  
Liverpool  
Dockers  
and send  
donations  
to: J Davies,  
Secretary,  
Merseyside  
Port Shop  
Stewards,  
19 Scorton  
Street,  
Liverpool L6  
4AS. Tel  
0151-207  
3388.

The Liverpool Dockers referred to international support. It would be impossible to go into detail but their action has inspired the setting up of an International Dock Workers Conference, the third of which was held in France in late October and attended by 18 delegates from ten different ports. On 30 September 1996 the dockers in Sydney, Australia, undertook a go-slow against National Line Vessels who have been breaking the strike at Liverpool. Dock workers in Denmark took solidarity strike action ranging from 3 - 24 hour stoppages. Dock workers in Montreal adopted a work to rule which will disrupt container traffic. Dock workers in Le Havre in France stopped work on an OOCL vessel for 16 hours. OOCL are still shipping containers through Liverpool. In Spanish ports around 4,000 workers took strike action for one hour on 28 October in solidarity with the Liverpool workers. There have also been blockades on containers from Liverpool at other ports around the world. The slogan "Workers around the world unite" could not be more appropriate.



# TOP TIPS

*the second in  
our series*

# TAKING STRIKE ACTION

In these times of high unemployment and aggressive anti-union laws, there will be many occasions in your workplace when no rights or laws can help you. In these situations the power of organised workers is the only leverage we have. Its ultimate expression is withdrawal of labour – **strike action**.

Currently most workers have very little experience of organising or of strikes. This allows full-time trade union officials and Left-sounding politicians to come in and exercise undue influence over workers. Workers should be in direct and complete control of their own workplace organisation – whether it is a strike or any other action they are undertaking (or even daily activity they are involved in).

This document is written in the best traditions of working class solidarity, for working class people who are in the process of organising their workplaces and contemplating (or actually taking) strike action in particular. It is relevant for all workplace organisation in general – it offers a few ideas and suggests some things to watch out for. It is based on our direct experience and by no means represents 'the right way' of how to run a strike. Resistance is always debated and included.

## ● get involved

**It is vital that all those on strike are directly involved in activities** either in the form of picket duty, collecting money, speaking or touring around, making contacts, speaking at meetings etc. These activities should not be confined to committees or more experienced members – by involving everyone this can help prevent boredom and stop isolation and demoralisation. Every striker should be encouraged to take part as it gives a purpose to the strike and helps make strikers class conscious. The most effective and inspirational way to involve all strikers is to regularly hold mass pickets.

## ● direct democracy

All strikers should be involved in the democratic running of the dispute through being involved on a daily basis. If decisions are rotated this should ensure that each striker builds up his/her organising experiences. As many decisions as possible should be made (and be seen to be made) when all strikers are present. If a list of peoples' specific skills are drawn up at the beginning of the dispute it can give you a start to organise from.

Here are some suggestions of skills and tasks to get things working for you – they may not all apply to your situation but all the issues in this list need to be considered.

- + picketing
- + visiting workplaces, community centres and trade union meetings to speak and raise money
- + preparing resolutions for other union branch meetings
- + organising petitions and financial collection groups for outside supermarkets, inside workplaces etc
- + treasurer/s to oversee all monies coming in and being spent
- + producing posters and leaflets and other publicity
- + a research team to investigate the company's finances, draw up a list of political contacts in other union branches, other unions, workplaces etc
- + a press co-ordinator to issue statements to the press (including Left press)

- + a welfare officer to attend to any striker's personal difficulties and to suggest forms of assistance – financial particularly also legal assistance when someone is arrested and/or charged

- + entertainments group – to organise socials and fund-raising nights. These can help draw in other workers, and demonstrate to strikers' families and friends that they are seen as part of the struggle

- + newsletter editors – a regular strike bulletin (daily if possible) needed to let people know what is happening. This helps prevent rumours and can hold the strike together. The bulletin can encourage contributions from as many strikers as possible and can be written and produced very quickly using Desktop Publishing equipment if available

- + legal officer – especially when people have been arrested and are awaiting trial, such a person can assist solicitors in preparing statements. S/he may also wish to try and get legal observers on the pickets – these can help to put some pressure on the police to behave a little better!



The most effective way to ensure direct democratic control of any dispute/strike action **by those workers directly involved in it** is to hold weekly (or more often) mass meetings of these workers, to democratically decide the conduct of the dispute and elect people to run it on your behalf between dispute/strike meetings.

A strike committee (or action group, or whatever you want to call it) should be elected by a mass meeting and thereafter accountable to, and anyone replaceable by, another mass meeting, if the workers decide this is necessary. This group will co-ordinate the day to day work created by the decisions at the mass meetings. Any posts or committees should also be democratically elected in this way – there should be no appointments. The strike committee should include a secretary (takes minutes and co-ordinates), treasurer and a chair (for meetings).

## ● cash

If a strike is to last then finance should be sorted out as quickly as possible – you're all going to run out of money with no wage coming in. Official unions often set up fighting funds but these seldom last very long and, if controlled by union officials, the money obviously can't be controlled by the strikers. In 'official' disputes small amounts of strike pay can usually be arranged, but not in 'unofficial' disputes. Part of the strike committee should be given the responsibility of raising funds. All monies must be controlled by the strikers themselves – if it is controlled by the union bureaucracy then disagreements over the strike or tactics can lead union officials to threaten the strike by withdrawing the funds.

Factory collections are the usual source of money. Appeals should also be made to unions and community organisations at all levels. The biggest collections are usually made when a striker has had the opportunity to speak to other workers. There is nothing as inspiring to other groups of workers as hearing from people on strike!

Every penny should be accounted for. Any distribution of the fund should be made in a way agreed at a mass meeting. This will often cause problems but it must be done and be seen to be done. A treasurer should be accountable to the strike committee in between mass meetings.

## ● propaganda

Usually involving strikers' bulletins, leaflets for the general public, translation of materials and articles in newspapers, including Left-wing press. The most important communication, however, is direct – from worker to worker. Public meetings, including street meetings, can also be used to gather support. Leaflets need to be written up and printed in all relevant languages.

## ● official or unofficial?

The only reason full time union officials use these terms is to sell the by such artificial considerations. If you are on strike, this is all that matters and **all** should support you on that basis. When the officials don't – tell them to get lost.

## ● full-time officials

There is a very long history of trade union officials initially giving "support" to a strike, offering help and assistance and then suddenly

leaving the strikers to their own devices. This is the usual pattern of events. It is essential that every strike committee should prepare their fellow members and strikers for this eventuality, financially, physically and psychologically. This means that the strikers should organise independently of the union bureaucrats from the start and must be self-supporting. They must be able to rely for aid and solidarity outside of the officials and bureaucracy.

The full-time official (usually appointed by other bureaucrats rather than elected by the workers) is supposed to represent and be under the control of the strikers. In reality, this rarely happens. The official's decisions will often be what the union solicitor says is the best strategy.

Most of the initiatives of union officials will be to avoid any threat to the funds of the union bureaucracy. Strikers never see most of this money anyway. If, for "legal reasons", an official has to be allowed to attend strike meetings, it





must be made clear that s/he is a paid official, and is expected to do as the members want - not the other way round. Beware: union officials sell out. Don't trust them.

### ● "revolutionary" groups

These are not well supported. Many of their members are either students or relative newcomers to the 'real world'. If they come and offer support, demands should be placed on these groups and the individuals. They should be expected to respect strikers' wishes. Those that do respect strikers' wishes usually find a better reception for their ideas in times of discussions, particularly during difficult periods in the struggle.

A strike must not be used to boost the potential of a revolutionary group over the needs of people on strike. Collection sheets and materials should be headed with the strikers' logo/slogan and *not* that of the revolutionary organisation. This makes good sense anyway - many people are reluctant to give to such groups, and are more willing to give to a group of strikers.

### direct action/solidarity/flying pickets and anti-union laws

● **It is absolutely essential to put a daily picket on the workplace which is the source of the strike.**

However, unless it is a very large workplace (involving many thousands of workers) then very few strikes are ever won by keeping your action confined to the workplace at the core of a dispute - you will quickly become isolated and eventually defeated. If it is obvious the bosses are not budging within a couple of weeks, then this always means they are digging in and preparing for a long battle. Solidarity action is the key to winning such a struggle. This means involving workers in other workplaces, usually with the same employers and sometimes unions. But not always, as other workers in and out of unions, often with *different* employers, are used to produce goods or do work to offset the loss of production at the source of a strike.

By far the best and most effective way to win solidarity action is to picket the workplaces of



the workers you want (and need) to involve. These are called *flying pickets* by militant trade unionists but *secondary pickets* by the bosses, who are shit-scared of them and wish to outlaw such solidarity action by the use of anti-union laws. All full time trade union officials fall into line with the bosses and the State's laws when they are used or even threatened.

If these laws are used then a strike can only be won if the striking workers and their supporters are prepared to defy the law, the bosses who use it and the trade union officials who support it. "Break the law, not the strike, not the workers' movement - no state interference in the democratic running of a trade union or workers' struggles!"

As picketing is so vital, so the control of workers on a picket line is also crucial. Stewards should be elected by a mass meeting to control the conduct of all workers and their supporters on a picket line. If other workers are brought in to assist in this, then these people should be clearly identified by the strike committee on this basis and subject to the control of the same committee. The strike committee must always retain the right to remove anyone from a picket line who they decide is acting contrary to the interests of the workers on strike and placing a dispute in jeopardy by their conduct. Contact should be established with sympathetic lawyers when a strike and picketing takes place, as action in the course of a strike could lead to harassment and arrest. Legal support is very important in such circumstances.

The building of permanent links between workers is vital during a strike - this is especially the case with workers in the same firm and/or industry - this will help in defeating future attacks on all workers. Regular direct contact between workers, before, during and after a strike, can go a long way to breaking isolation and encouraging rank and file resistance.

### unemployed people and scabbing

● To guard against scabs, it is essential to work amongst unemployed people -



alongside claimants' unions or groups - and, if possible, to organise them, so that unity of action can be established to fight threats to end their meagre benefits if they do not accept scab jobs. Leafletting of dole offices, especially when strikers jobs are being advertised, is vital. Unemployed people should be encouraged to get involved in the strike.

## discussion meetings

Discussion meetings between workers on issues relevant to a strike should be organised during and after the strike. This will encourage discussion and the development of new ideas and tactics to use during the strike. At the end of the strike, the experiences of the workers should be recalled and written down. Successes and failures should be analysed and then they can be used in future strikes. Strikers may not win their particular struggle, but they can help others to learn from their experiences and win the next time.

## occupations

The most effective means of preventing the boss from resuming production in the course of a strike, or of disposing of the premises and its assets if closing down, is occupation of the premises. Such a course of action can be carried out only by a united effort, involving the unemployed, and should not be restricted to what may be meagre forces involved in the dispute. Details, methods and planning can only be decided on the site and according to circumstances prevailing.

## strike support groups

It is vital that, from the start, an independent Strike Support Group is set up. The purpose of this is for both supporters and strikers to decide on how best to coordinate support for the strike. This Group must be completely accountable to the strikers. This is necessary so that support for the strike can be agreed collectively, by everyone involved. This also avoids the problem of political groups going off and doing "strike support work" (like collections) under the name of their own organisation, rather than being fully accountable to the strikers.

## in conclusion

These are just some suggestions and basic guidelines for the conduct (and hopefully success) of an industrial dispute or strike.

The essence of such strike and solidarity action is to keep this completely under the direct control of the workers themselves and totally independent from the trade union and political bureaucracies - large or small.

**The real message is: to win a strike on a difficult issue such as sackings and closures in today's industrial and political climate, you have to be prepared to fight full time union officials as well as all the other forces ranged against you. All full time union officials will settle for something which is infinitely more in line with what the bosses want than what the workers have been or are struggling for.**

# resistance policy on workplace organisation

We aim to build and strengthen workplace organisation. We aim to develop strong, independent workplace organisations and to link them on a federalist basis across areas and industries and through this build instruments of revolutionary change.

We recognise the fundamental connection between so-called "workplace" and "community" struggles. The best way of building on this is through local centres like the Colin Roach Centre, where common interests can be shared and built on. The five points around which our strategy for workplace organisation is built are:

- 1 The need for rank and file organisations to be based on complete independence from the trade union and Labour Party bureaucracies.
- 2 The need to defy and campaign for the repeal of all anti-trade union laws.
- 3 Total opposition to the blacklist, victimisation and unemployment.
- 4 The need to reclaim and revolutionise workplace organisation.
- 5 The necessity of building direct international links between workers.

We are opposed to all anti-trade union laws.

We believe that unions must be independent of the state. We are for workers self-management of production.

We are for the rights of all workers to belong to a trade union except fascists, police officers, prison officers and other agents of state repression.

We recognise that many workers, at present, have no choice but to join reformist unions and agitate within them.





# the effect of rail privatisation and the RMT's response

*Thousands of jobs have been lost on the railways. Both major unions, ASLEF and the Rail, Maritime and Transport (RMT) have not been able to stop cuts in either jobs or services. The RMT have failed miserably to either outline any effective tactics to stop what's happening or to halt the massive drain in union membership, the membership figures of the RMT having collapsed from around 100,000 in the late 80's to just under 30,000 today.*

*The following article from a leading activist on the rail, examines what's happening and asks whether the union leadership has any real plans to organise resistance to the current attacks.*

As expected, rail privatisation has resulted in private companies attacking their workforce's terms and conditions. Service conditions are being altered by managers, who blatantly tell union reps that they want more work for less money. To achieve this they are attempting to get area reps to agree to multi-skilling. The companies want to combine three separate sets of skills, currently carried out by three sections of the workforce, into one. Massive job losses will occur.

Surprisingly, RMT route council reps recommended unanimously that the union executive accept a deal that, in return for a 3.5% pay rise and the return to deducting union subs from the company paybill, would allow pilot schemes in which workers do the duties of other grades. This contradicts union policy against multi-skilling and is extremely shortsighted, as by allowing management to deduct union subs direct from wages (they previously withdrew from such an agreement because of a RMT strike decision) they will be giving private companies a loaded gun to use any time the union threatens further action. The RMT executive committee, although advised by their route council reps to accept the deal, shouldn't have done so. The old adage "Shame on you if you trick me once, shame on me if you trick me twice" seems appropriate.

The pay deal also commits the union to re-negotiating redundancy, promotion and transfer arrangements. Compulsory redundancy is on the agenda with companies proposing that instead of the current last in/first out basis that people will be selected on flexibility, attitude, disciplinary record and potential. Nearness to home is another criteria which will be used (which may well imply that free travel for railworkers is under threat). New entrants already do not qualify for travel.

This all amounts to an attempt to cut the staff drastically and to ensure company profits by further burdening an overstretched workforce. The proposals on compulsory redundancy if forced through will also allow the management to fill what jobs are left with "yes-men". Even the most moderate union supporter will not be safe and reps will become an endangered species.

The RMT executive must immediately launch a campaign to ensure that any pilot schemes which conclude that multi-skilling is acceptable are opposed, if necessary, with industrial action. The proposals for the alterations to the promotion, transfer and redundancy arrangements must be rejected wholesale and if managers intend to implement them must be opposed industrially.

If the RMT refuses to do this they will sign their own death warrant. It is currently extremely difficult to fill any representatives' positions because reps are coming under extreme pressure if they oppose management on any issues. The case of Joe Morrison in Scotland dramatically illustrates this. He is a shop steward who refused to accept that 50 workers should have their messing facilities withdrawn and be replaced with buckets of water in which they were supposed to wash. The result of Joe's upholding basic human rights was that a manager claimed Joe

threatened him and subsequently sacked him. The RMT to its credit is striking on Joe's behalf in Scotland and an interim industrial tribunal has stated that he was clearly sacked for trade union activities. They have ordered management to reinstate him, but they are now trying to move him to different depot. However, defending individual reps is not enough. The whole reasoning behind trade unions is collective action. This philosophy means that when a member of a national union is attacked a union should respond nationally.

The Liverpool dockers have shown that anti-trade union laws can be effectively opposed. A mood of sullen resentment amongst railway workers currently prevails, effective leadership can turn this into a combative force. To do this will mean acting across company boundaries and therefore initiating secondary action. It remains to be seen if the RMT will seize the opportunity to fight or is content to withdraw because members are not confident that they will be represented. Fortune favours the brave - let's hope the RMT executive will act bravely enough to find favour.

RMT Midland District Council union rep

## obituary - Mickey Fenn

Mickey Fenn, ex-Tilbury dock worker and one of the most committed and respected working class socialists, died in July 1996, aged 58.

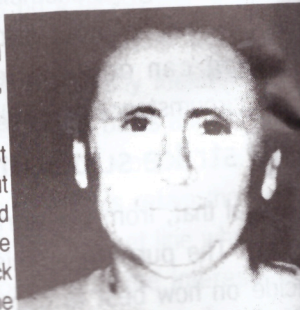
Mickey was a rank and file trade unionist and an active anti-racist. He carried out his political work with a passion few could match. His commitment at his workplace was seen during the 1972 and 1989 dock strikes including his campaigning for the release of his 5 work mates when they were imprisoned in Pentonville for the crime of secondary picketing. Perhaps his most courageous, was his fight against racism in the London Docks following support by some dock workers for Enoch Powell in 1968.

Mickey joined and left both the British Communist Party and the Socialist Workers Party. Neither were able to match up to him. Many in the SWP called Mickey a 'squaddist'. He preferred deeds to words. After he parted company with the SWP in the late 70's he continued to organise direct action against the National Front and British Nationalist Party.

I got to know Mickey during the 1989 National Dock Strike which followed the scrapping of the National Dock Labour Scheme. An East London Dockers Support Group was set up and Mickey attended nearly all meetings. He was Chair of the rank and file National Port Shop Stewards Committee and worked tirelessly, travelling the length and breadth of the country, putting the dockers case. He was a wonderful orator who would speak with passion, intellect and, when needed, humour. Whether speaking to an audience of 5 or 500, he gave it his all.

After the strike collapsed, Mickey and 18 of his colleagues at Tilbury were victimised for their trade union activities and were sacked. A long court case took place which culminated with Mickey failing to be reinstated, being given compensation. Mickey was realistic enough to know that the court would not give him his job back, but the ending of the dock strike meant that industrial action needed would not be forthcoming. Even after this blow Mickey continued his political activity with gusto.

Mickey was just 58 when he died. His youthful enthusiasm made him much younger. I am glad that I had the privilege of knowing him.





# news from the sites

Brian Higgins, secretary of Northampton branch of UCATT (Union of Construction and Allied Trades and Technicians), as well as the rank and file

'Building Worker Group' has been served with a writ from Dominic Hehir, a full-time official of the union. Hehir has cited a letter written by Brian Higgins to the 'Irish Post' which cited Hehir's inconsistent record on defending UCATT members at Industrial Tribunals (see letter below).

## DEFEND BRIAN HIGGINS

### A different case of treatment

You report on UCATT and Denis Falvey winning an industrial tribunal and that Johnny Gould was the UCATT official involved (The Irish Post, September 7). I was on the picket-line at Vascroft which secured reinstatement for all the workers outside the gate before Vascroft decided to single out Denis Falvey and the other bricklayer who was in the TGWU. Congratulations to Denis, Johnny Gould and all concerned in this tribunal victory.

However, I also notice that a photograph of Dominic Hehir, a full-time UCATT official in London, figures very prominently in the article and he is quoted as saying, among other things: "We made a decision right from the start to defend our man". What a resolute fellow Dominic appears to be.

Not so in the case of John Jones, a UCATT shop steward in Southwark DLO, who was singled out with another worker, a plumber in EPTU, and sacked by Southwark Council under the guise of TUPE last October. These sackings

happened in spite of the fact that John Jones and the other worker had a grievance procedure out against the council at the time of their sackings, but which the council totally ignored. This is utterly contrary to the union/management procedures laid down in these matters.

John Jones and the other worker put on a picket. They asked for support on this picket line and my UCATT branch and the rank and

file "Building Worker" group, of which I am secretary, were among quite a few trade unions and other working-class organisations who gave support.

In conjunction with this, the two sacked workers initiated proceedings for an industrial tribunal on the grounds of unfair dismissal. As a UCATT member John Jones rightly asked Dominic Hehir, who was the full-time official concerned with this situation in Southwark, to represent him at the tribunal. Hehir and UCATT were also asked to test the case in a court of law as TUPE, a European employment law, was clearly being breached in this instance.

To their eternal disgrace, Dominic Hehir and Lou Lewis, the UCATT regional secretary for London and the South East, backed by the Southwark DLO Building Works UCATT Convenor, Tony O'Brien, steadfastly and resolutely refused to represent John Jones at an industrial tribunal or to test the case in a court of law.

The two workers bravely carried on picketing but had to give up their struggle for reinstatement of their grievance procedures and jobs.

When a mass meeting in April of this year voted against supporting them any further.

Johnny Gould was not, of course, the UCATT official who let John Jones down so badly in Southwark. But what did happen there doesn't exactly square up with his

statement: "UCATT will vigorously defend the trade union rights of its members in the courts and employers should think twice before attacking genuine trade unions". He would have been more correct to have said "some of its members".

Pity Dominic Hehir didn't decide to defend John Jones, a UCATT member and shop steward, right from the start in Southwark, or even half way through.

Incidentally, is it coincidental Hehir just happened to be standing for election as a UCATT regional organiser this September that he appeared and said what he did in your paper? Strange how officials like him never appear or give quotes about their more dastardly deeds. Perhaps this letter might change that.

BRIAN HIGGINS  
Secretary,  
Northampton branch UCATT.

The writ itself was served on Brian at 6.30pm on Saturday November 9th, giving him just two weeks to reply. Because of victimisation Brian has not worked for many years, and legal aid is not available in libel situations. As such he couldn't hope to obtain the legal assistance he required - it would literally cost too much. Well, no doubt that's what Hehir was hoping! Unfortunately, Hehir is wrong, a close contact of the Colin Roach Centre's going to do it and Hehir may well have bitten off too much to chew...

The decision by Hehir is unprecedented and has (very) far reaching consequences for all trade union activists who may wish to express criticism of their trade union officials. If activists are faced with the threat of being taken to court and having all their assets taken away then this is going to make it difficult for them to speak out. As such the case also has consequences for free speech in general.

Details of the case appear below, but a couple of points require highlighting. As libel involves going to the High Court and costs literally thousands then who is paying for this? UCATT is just about broke and Hehir's wages can't possibly cover the costs. It may well be that the Building Employers or even a more murky organisation such as the Freedom Association are involved. No doubt we'll find out in good time.

It also cannot be coincidental that this attack takes place at a time when the activities and propaganda by the Building Worker Group have been increasing and just as the group has launched its own Safety Campaign, whereby when a worker is killed on a site it is proposed to try and picket out the site the following day. This will undoubtedly bring confrontation with the employers, police and the trade union bureaucracy. However, it brings the potential of harnessing the massive anger which exists amongst building workers into strike action and all of the above fear this.

The solicitor involved in the case, Louise Christian of Christian Fisher, presents herself to other organisations as being sympathetic towards progressive causes. She has been on numerous delegations to Kurdistan and Turkey, where amongst many other activities she has added her name to protests against attacks on trade unionists, (for greater detail of which see the article on Turkey and Kurdistan in this issue of RPM), including imprisonment and executions.





Well, what's the difference when it comes to closer to home? Obviously money - and then all so-called principles fly out of the window! We intend to be raising this with our supporters within the Turkish and Kurdish community and make it as embarrassing as possible for Louise Christian. Bleeding liberals, don't they make you just sick!

Incidentally, the pamphlet that the Colin Roach Centre printed on the Building Worker Group is cited in the writ. It's still on sale (at £1.50 plus 39 p postage) and it's a good expose of what's happening on the sites and amongst the union bureaucracy as well. As Hehir's actions are intended to silence Brian, and by implication the Building Worker Group, you could also consider getting a copy of their recent newspaper from the Colin Roach Centre (only 50p which also covers the cost of postage).

Resistance will be standing full-square with Brian Higgins against the attacks on him by Hehir. A Defence Campaign has been established and model resolutions are available for UCATT branches (as well as branches in other unions). Speakers are also available.

The next campaign meeting takes place at the Jolly Gardners, Euston Street NW1 (next to euston station) at 7pm on Tuesday December 10th.

## Brian Higgins Defence Campaign

The story so far...

Two building workers, John Jones a UCATT Shop Steward and Terry Mason, a plumber in EPIU, were sacked by Southwark Council Direct Labour Organisation last October, for refusing to accept a transfer, under the guise of TUPE (supposedly European Employment Protection Law), to a cowboy construction company called Botes. These sackings took place while John and Terry had a grievance out with the Council against the transfers. Clearly laid down union/management agreements mean there should be no sackings or transfers until all grievance procedures are exhausted. Dominic Hehir, a full-time UCATT official in London, was supposed to have ensured these agreements were adhered to.

The two sacked workers put on a picket. The Building Worker Group rank and file organisation and Northampton UCATT Branch were among quite a few groups who supported this picket and struggle. The two workers also asked UCATT and EPIU to take out Industrial Tribunals for unfair dismissal. The EPIU have done this for Terry Mason.

To his eternal disgrace, Dominic Hehir supported the Council in these sackings. John Jones was forced to go to the local Law Centre to take up his IT case. Dominic Hehir didn't turn up to the preliminary hearing, meaning he refused to turn up.

## Building Worker

BUILDING WORKER SAFETY CAMPAIGN

**TO STOP THE KILLING  
- STOP PRODUCTION**



The Slaughter Continues

In the Edinburgh Evening News on 7 May this year, it was reported that a 70ft high scaffold collapsed on a Morrison Construction site. One building worker was killed and another four seriously injured. The type of scaffold used by the employer was not adequate for such a high structure. How much longer will the building employers be allowed to get away with what amounts to murder? How much longer before building workers decide enough is enough? A higher percentage of building workers are killed in relation to the number of workers employed in the industry than ever.

In the same paper on 7 May on page three there is an article entitled 'High Speed Roadways Misery'. It then goes on: 'Superman construction workers are

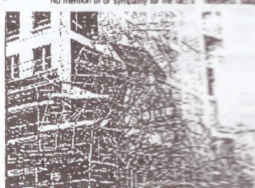
celebrating after slamming up a road bridge in half a day. Near the end of states: 'The joint venture team hit the headlines in March when another bridge collapsed suddenly. Three workers escaped injury when the 30ft high Old Greenhedges Bridge crumbled. The accident caused traffic chaos and tons of rubble were cleared from the road. No mention of or sympathy for the fact

could have been the three building workers they had to clear from the rubble and the road.

Why is the killing of building workers so socially acceptable?

We draw attention to the Edinburgh Evening News and these quotes because as well as showing the needless slaughter of building workers

continues on UK construction sites, these more than adequately illustrate the utterly cynical and unrepentant attitude of the media towards the lives and safety of construction workers. This attitude is reflected in the quality of concrete in general towards death and injury in construction. It's just another construction story to read with your tea and then forget about it. There is never a follow-up, no mention of the



The Irish Post of 7 September 1996 quoted Dominic Hehir as saying, in relation to the winning of an IT appeal for another UCATT member, "We made a decision right from the start to defend our man". Brian Higgins, secretary of Northampton UCATT Branch, felt the need to put the record straight on what Dominic Hehir had done in Southwark and wrote the letter (printed on previous page) to the Irish Post, which they published on 5 October 1996.

Brian Higgins, as a principled trade unionist, will not give in to legal blackmail. He rightly refuses to apologise or retract anything. He and other UCATT

members can substantiate everything written about Dominic Hehir and will do so if asked by the appropriate union body. If Hehir goes ahead with his High Court action, Brian Higgins will have no option but to substantiate what has been written about Hehir in court also. This is Hehir's choice, no-one else's.

Hehir's action is indefensible. It lines him up with the building employers and also the anti-union laws, which are meant to silence trade unionists. We are passionately urging UCATT members and branches to charge Dominic Hehir with bringing UCATT into serious disrepute and to call for his expulsion from the union.

We urge other workers and trade unionists to ensure he is effectively expelled from the trade union and working class movement itself. He should be treated like the pariah he is and his conduct deserves - which is treachery almost beyond belief.

The trade union movement has reached a watershed with Hehir's conduct. There can be no equivocation. The issue is quite simple, as is the question. Do you support the right of building workers and all trade unionists to freedom of speech and to criticise full-time officials, or do you support Dominic Hehir in his legal moves to the High Court to end these basic democratic and political freedoms?

**MESSAGES OF SUPPORT, MODEL RESOLUTIONS, FINANCIAL DONATIONS AND INVITATIONS TO SPEAK AT MEETINGS TO BE SENT TO -**

**BRIAN HIGGINS DEFENCE CAMPAIGN, C/O COLIN ROACH CENTRE, 56 CLARENCE ROAD, LONDON E5 8SW. TEL - 0181 533 7111**



# an introduction to Irish history

After all the hype and fuss about the film "Michael Collins" sparked a wider interest in the subject, in this issue RPM begins a series of articles designed to bring you a brief introduction to the politics and history of Ireland. Written by Belfast-based activist Gerry Downes.

Perhaps the most difficult aspect when writing about the history of Ireland is deciding a starting point. Every author will have her or his own view of which events most directly influence Ireland today. It is my intention in this and subsequent articles to give an overview of those events and personalities which I consider most influence the present struggle to remove Britain's presence from Ireland.

For this reason and with true Irish paradox I choose to start this introduction to a study of recent Irish history with the Act of Union of 1800. The entire Home Rule agitation and all the 19th and 20th century movements for parliamentary independence – which will be covered in further articles – were conditioned by the fact that to take legal effect they required the repeal of this statute at Westminster.

The Act of Union was intimately bound up with, and was in fact a direct response to, Irish nationalism. In the modern sense, the words Nationalist and Republicanism in Ireland date from the 1790s. They derive from, and were to some extent determined by, the French Revolutionary experience.

The Act of Union was a deliberate counter to these phenomena and so long as it has been in existence those forces which provoked its inception have sought its removal. Thus there is a significant organic unity in the conflict of the years 1795 to present.

Of course, the consideration of subordination to Britain deeply influenced almost every Irish development for several centuries before 1800 but this subordination took on a radically different form under the Act of Union, the effects of which govern Irish politics and many aspects of Irish social and economic life to the present day.

For the groups who engrossed domestic political power in Ireland in 1800 the Union meant a surrender of some privileges but not many. In return, the British religion, their property and their social domination were to be secured. They were to be guaranteed equal rights of church, land, ascendancy, race and citizenship with their "fellows in Great Britain".

This was in sharp contrast to Irish Nationalists/Republicans of the day who believed the government, or rather parliament, did not represent in any acceptable sense "the people" and so gradually the idea of superseding the faults by a legitimate Irish government took shape. Of course, United Irishmen, deeply influenced by the new French radicalism of the 1790s grounded themselves on the theory that "the people" (or rather that handful of activists that expressed or discerned their own role) were the only true government – the source of law.

The Act of Union was like much other legislation before and since, an act of miscalculations, born of fears – of French invasion, of revolution, of social levelling and of what a frightened peasantry or hysterical ruling class might undertake in terror. To the British Government it promised to close a dangerous gap in national defence and to furnish a solution to what was already an Irish question. The population of Ireland, comprising one third of the inhabitants of the British Isles, was three quarters disaffected. Cooke, Pitt's under-secretary, assured him that: "By giving the Irish one hundred members in an assembly of 650 they will be rendered impotent to operate in that assembly but it will be invested with Irish assent to its authority". With 100 members moreover Ireland was grossly under-represented in terms of population. The Church of Ireland was guaranteed "forever" ("forever" was a sort of incantation in the Act), its ecclesiastical supremacy, its corporate prosperity and its traditional tithes income – by virtue of the complete unity of church and State in the new policy. Ireland today is still directly influenced by all of those structures put in place under the Act of Union.



Next issue - the first armed attempt to end the Act of Union.



# gun law

The slaughter of children at Dunblane School by Thomas Hamilton has fuelled a nationwide campaign to have handguns banned. There are also calls for the banning of knives, with the Labour Party trying to out-gun the Tories on the "law and order" ticket. A climate has been created by the politicians and mass media that the greatest threat to people's lives is crime, or rather the fear of it – not unemployment, low wages, lack of decent accommodation or a run-down National Health Service.

At the same time as the restrictions on guns and knives gathers momentum, the State itself is continuing to dramatically increase its own access to military equipment and hardware. The police now have access to CS gas (which killed Ibrahima Sey in Newham in April 1996), the long-handled baton (which killed Brian Douglas in Clapham in May 1995) and an increasing number of police officers are continuously patrolling the streets of London carrying a range of guns and other lethal weapons. There have been no calls for these to be controlled or banned.

It is against such a background that the case of David Ewin, or rather that of PC Patrick Hodgeson, comes before the Old Bailey on 2 December. Hodgeson is charged with the murder of Ewin on 28 February 1995 following an incident in Barnes to which Hodgeson, as a member of the Metropolitan Police S019 firearms unit, was called

Hodgeson, along with Sergeant Carol White and PC Kelley, formed an "armed response unit" and all carried a 9mm Glock handgun containing a full clip of 17 rounds and two spare magazines. In the safe in the boot of their unmarked Rover, were two Heckler and Koch MP5 carbines loaded with 40 rounds each. They were on routine patrol when they



Glock 17 self-loading 9mm pistol

received a call about a stolen Toyota MR2, which they later spotted in Castlenau SW13, which runs from Hammersmith Bridge Road to Barnes.

Hodgeson and Kelley got out of the car and would have witnessed Ewin take a can of beer from a fridge in the "Costcutter" shop, then run for it, leaving the beer on the counter. Jumping into the stolen car, Ewin attempted to drive off, but was blocked in by the police car (driven by Sergeant White). At the same time, a white box-van driven by a Mr Cudey and Mr Gadgel cut off Ewin's other escape route. A bus had blocked the road behind him. Ewin was trapped.

Hodgeson ran round to the driver's side of the car, taking out his gun and hammering on the windscreen. In Ewin's desperate attempt to escape, he hit a car parked immediately in front of him. Hodgeson attempted to gain access to Ewin's MR2 but was almost crushed between the side of it and the police car. When the car stopped, PC Kelley arrested the passenger, Charles McKray. No gun was used during this arrest.

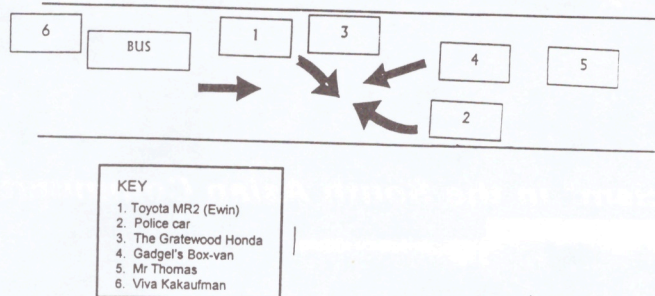
Hodgeson, clearly desperate and presumably angry at his inability to make an arrest, ran from the driver's side of the car to the passenger's side where he crouched down and fired two shots into David Ewin through the unopened window. Ewin was taken by air ambulance to hospital and died on 16 March of "multi-organ failure after firearm injury", which led to infection and internal bleeding.

Hodgeson claimed at an "old style" committals hearing in March 1996 that he feared for his life and had acted reasonably. This was not accepted. In training a police officer is taught that a firearm may only be used as a last resort. One of Hodgeson's colleagues, PC Kelley, made clear that he



Figure 1

Position of various vehicles and their movements in Castelnau



did not consider that this was such a situation. In fact, Hodgeson appears to have pulled his gun as a first resort against an unarmed man. Section 3 of the Criminal Law Act 1967 states that a person may use reasonable force under the circumstances, to apprehend someone.

- ★ It was unreasonable of Hodgeson to draw his gun – in doing so he brought about the escalation of the incident until it was out of control.
- ★ It was therefore an unlawful act to draw his gun.
- ★ It was unreasonable and unsafe to use a gun without a safety catch to hit the windscreen of the MR2.

Hodgeson could have attempted to turn the ignition off or asked the bus to move forward blocking the Toyota in so that it could not move at all. Hodgeson must have panicked. Ewin must have been panicked as a consequence of Hodgeson's behaviour and therefore ignored the demands to stop and instead drove as he did. There must have been a time when the MR2 was still allowing Mckray to be arrested and Hodgeson to move around to the passenger side, where he then had other options at his disposal – Shooting is not the usual course of action taken by officers dealing with a stolen car. **It was unlawful of Hodgeson to pull his gun, it was dangerous for him to hit the windscreen with it and it was unnecessary for him to fire it.**

As an aside, it should be noted that at the time (and without seeing any evidence) the Metropolitan Police Commissioner, Paul Condon, praised Hodgeson as being "very brave".

The police also gave statements to the press which were wildly inaccurate and claimed that Hodgeson had been clinging to the front of a (boxed-in) car which was being driven at tremendous speed. He was able to take out his gun, warn Ewin, shoot him and come to no harm when the car came to a halt! Afterwards, when they discovered that Ewin had a string of previous prosecutions, they released these to the press thus putting Ewin "on trial" rather than Hodgeson and the Met Police as a whole.

When the CRC was approached by David Ewin's widow Sarah, who was five months pregnant at the time of David's death, we issued a press release stating: "This is the clearest case yet of a premeditated murder by a Metropolitan Police Officer." However, we never for a moment expected Hodgeson to actually be charged with murder. Along with Sarah Ewin, her son Albert David Ewin, family and friends, we will be attending the trial of Patrick Hodgeson more in hope than expectation that the state is capable of convicting "one of its own". Readers are invited to do the same.

# Black Women's Rape Action Project

by Cristel Amiss and Sara Callaway

The Black Women's Rape Action Project (BWRAP) offers support and advice to black and immigrant women, including refugees and asylum seekers who have suffered rape or sexual assault. The devastating effects of rape on black, immigrant and refugee women and girls are compounded by the lack of official concern and the discrimination we face everywhere.

BWRAP is regularly asked to assess whether asylum seekers have suffered rape or other sexual violence in their country of origin, how it has affected them, and prepare reports on this which form part of their legal case. It is not quick or easy for women to speak about the violence they have suffered, particularly when their right to stay in Britain depends on "saying the right thing" in immigration interviews, usually conducted in translation by men who don't respect their experience. Women often have been raped by police or soldiers, either in raids on their home, or when they were detained without charge. Many are mothers - some were teenagers at the time of the assaults.

The short assessment procedure brought in by the Immigration and Asylum Bill reduces the time available to compile evidence and get expert reports on full circumstances of what women have suffered. Benefit cuts have a particularly devastating effect on women who are traumatised and are already facing a severe shortage of available resources.

Although it is estimated that 50% of refugee women are rape survivors, until recently rape and sexual assault were rarely acknowledged as grounds for asylum. The UN High Commission for Refugees has highlighted that sexual violence is a common method of torture, but little is available on its effects, which severely disadvantages women and children.

The Home Office turns down many claims, often refusing to accept the volume of evidence, and then claims that 90% of asylum seekers are "bogus". BWRAP is pressing the UK government to honour its commitments at the UN Fourth World Conference on Women to recognise "as refugees those women whose claim to refugee status is based upon the well-founded fear of persecution ... including persecution through sexual violence".

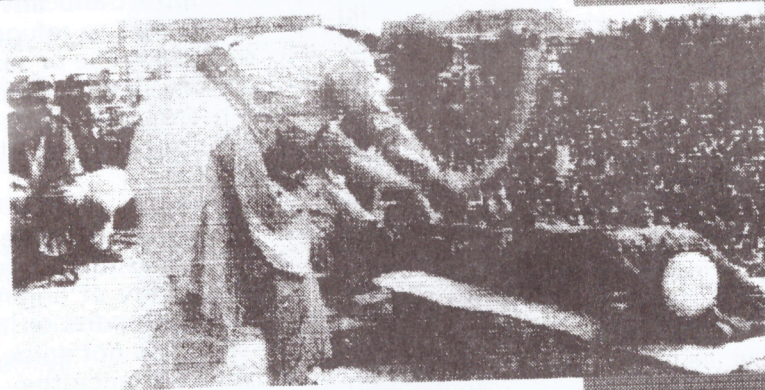
Recently we helped a Kurdish woman who was gang-raped by Turkish police to claim asylum, which was upheld. This can strengthen the case for rape perpetrated by those in authority to be considered as ground for asylum – a matter of life and death for many refugee women and their children.

Contact - Black Women's Rape Action Project, Crossroads Women's Centre, PO Box 287, London NW6 5QU. Tel: 0171-482 2496. Fax: 0171-209 4761



# who put the mental in fundamental?

*The rise of "Clerico-Fascism" in the South Asian Community*



The names of Hizb-ut-tahrir, Al Muhajiroun, the BJP, the RSS, Shiv Sena and the Sikh Youtir Federation are becoming increasingly prominent in British political life. They represent different strands of Muslim, Hindu, and Sikh fundamentalism which seek to divide Asian communities on the basis of religion and are increasingly splintering opposition to "White racism". They can all be defined as theocratic ideologies which believe that all other religions must be outlawed and its followers either forcibly 'converted' or, in the final analysis, eliminated.

There is a political war taking place between the ideas of communalism and the ideas of secularism. At present the followers of "clerico-Fascism" are organised and vociferous - its opponents are not. With a few laudable exceptions such as the Indian Workers Association (Great Britain), organisations working in the Asian communities have been noticeable by their silence on the activities of the groups mentioned above, as have mainstream politicians.

At the height of the inter-communal conflict in India 4 years ago there were also violent incidents in Britain, including London. Working at the time for Camden Racial Equality Council, I decided that it was essential that we respond politically. Urgent meetings were held, local organisations were mailed, and press releases were issued. As part of the response I contacted an East London monitoring organisation to find out what their response was, their reply was stunning - "We are keeping our head down on this one".

In some London boroughs fundamentalist organisations receive covert (and occasionally overt) support from religious and national centres. Many temples, mosques and gurdwaras offer resource and meeting space. Some even invite them as guest speakers - witness Advani, the BJP (Hindu fundamentalist) leader from India speaking at the opening of the Hindu temple in Neasden. Some Indian and Pakistani community centres do likewise.

As recently as this year, while working for Brent Racial Equality Council, I advised Ken Livingstone MP, that he was being conned into speaking at a 'front' meeting for Hizb-ut-Tahrir in Willesden. "Red Ken" ignored my advice (along with pages of relevant documentation) and proceeded to speak on a platform with Omar Bakri (HUT/Al Muhajiroun), a man who openly calls for the "killing of Jews". One can only surmise that his decision may have been determined by electoral considerations, rather than when the vast majority of local Muslims despite the politics of HUT.

Civil Liberties groups and Politicians have campaigned for fanatics like Masari (fundamentalist Saudi Arabian opposition leader) and Chahal (Khalistani leader); the Anti Racist Alliance invites Bakri and the Siddiqui (Muslim Parliament) to speak at its rally on the Asylum and Immigration Bill. What is going on? Don't they realise that fascism can have different faces with different traditions? Let's be clear that fascism can be based on religion as well as race and class. Let's be clear that the "Final Solution of Clerico-Fascism" is the persecution, slaughter and genocide of racial and religious minorities, the elimination of Communists, Socialists and Anarchists, the total oppression of women - witness the Taliban in Afghanistan, which has banned women from working and introduced summary execution for religiously-based offences.

Local organisations (black and white) and politicians are mistakenly terrified of alienating potential supporters and voters. It is time they realised, not least those from the Asian communities, that "Clerico-Fascism" will not go away by ignoring it or colluding with it. For all anti fascists in Britain ideological and physical opposition to fascism must include ideological and physical opposition to a form of fascism that affects all of us.

Indranil Ray, central London Resistance

In the next issue we will be looking at Zionism and the Nation of Islam



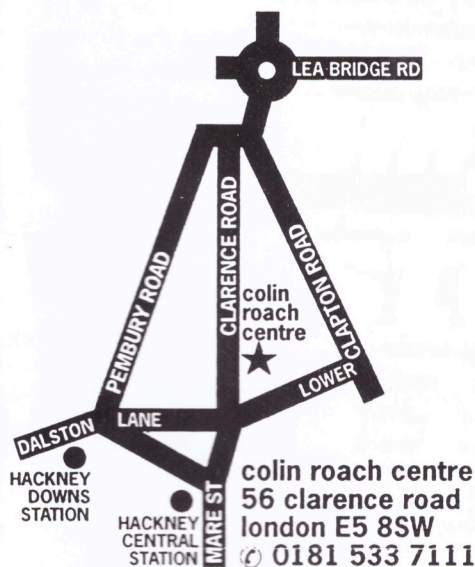
Dear Friends,

It recently occurred to me that I had never written and thanked you for all your help and support over the recent years.

When, almost 3 years ago I first contacted the Colin Roach Centre, the first thing that struck me about the people and members was how helpful and willing everyone was, the next thing was how genuine and good natured each individual appeared to be. I soon learned that active members were highly motivated, intelligent well informed individuals who gave an extraordinary amount of their time and money without receiving any financial reward.

Later while I was held in prison the help and support I received was a lifeline and the support through various trials and legal actions has been a great comfort. I would especially like to thank Celia S and Graham S and all who gave their time to campaigning for me.

All the best,  
Malcolm Kennedy.



"Resistance is a political organisation which attempts to bring together two major strands in British political struggle—trade union and community organising. As such it will respect the differing traditions and methods of organising of each, and attempt to forge a unity which brings together the respective strengths of each, without the domination of either.

As a result it understands the fact that the working class is of all races, genders, sexualities and abilities, and not only suffers different oppressions, but experiences class oppression in different ways. Society as a whole, and the left in particular, try and deny this fact. Only when it is accepted will the links between specific experiences of oppression and capitalism become clearer.

As a result Resistance is anti-capitalist in its outlook. Capitalism is a system dedicated to the profit motive, creating a world in which war, famine, mass unemployment and poverty are inevitable. We are for a system based on the needs of working class people, and are working for a society in which all are working class. Resistance recognises that only the working class has the potential radically to change the world. As such it is our aim to create an organisation made up of a majority of working class people and including their allies.

Resistance, reflecting this effort, will organise both in the workplace and in the local community. Therefore, it will develop political and organising methods which are suitable to these different situations.

Unlike other political organisations, it intends to take its lead from local people, not simply from activists or any central committee within the organisation. Organisation of political work again will reflect this outlook.

Finally, one element in the political and economic power of the ruling class is its ability to discount the real abilities of working class people in particular, and of any opponent in general. Resistance will undertake work internally to counter this, so that all members can take a leadership role and undertake full responsibility within the organisation."

From the constitution of Resistance, available from the Colin Roach Centre.

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## n o t i c e b o a r d

**Friday December 13th**, starting at 8.00pm at the Calthorpe Arms, Gray's Inn Road WC1X. **Fund-raising social for Resistance.** Music, quiz, raffle and special guests. £2.50.

**Saturday December 14th – Picket of Harmondsworth Detention Centre** between 11.30am and 1.30pm. Bring gifts for the refugees

locked up for coming here to escape persecution. Details on 0181 571 5019.

**December 14th – Liverpool Dockers Support March.** Assemble Marble Arch at 12 noon for demonstration to Conway Hall, Red Lion Square.

**December 14th** – Republican Forum meeting on **"The Irish Peace Process"** at 2pm at Conway Hall.

**January 25th 1997 – Remember "Bloody Sunday" march** in London. Details on 0171 609 1743.

**Resistance agm** planned for **Saturday February 8th 1997.**



# what is resistance

and what does it do?

For a number of years a variety of successful groups operating out of the Colin Roach Centre (an independent non state-funded organisation in Hackney) have organised resistance on both a local and national scale, working on a practical and political level around issues such as policing, immigration, grassroots trade union organisation and fighting racism and fascism.

Groups based at the Centre have also initiated community defence projects, struggles against deportations, bad housing, council inspired closures and estate sell offs. We have a history of both practical and political support for strikes (including strikes organised by our own members in their workplaces) and building links with organisations internationally.

Our most highly publicised successes have involved defending more than 600 victims of police crime (including over 170 in 1996), with an astonishing 80% success rate in court. We have won almost threequarters of a million pounds in compensation for the victims of police crime and have prevented many people from going to prison, as well as enabling others to be released from prison on appeal.

In the course of our casework and campaigns we recognised that if we wanted to achieve more than single issue successes or reforms we needed to work together – we had common aims and experiences and we decided we had to widen the struggle, bringing together community and workplace struggles to form a new broad-based political movement.

At the end of 1995 we formed Resistance – a revolutionary movement committed to fighting for a society where people are more important than profit. Our members are Black (Asian, African and Caribbean) and White; many of us are Socialists, Communists and Anarchists, many have no political "label", we are united in the belief that the system under which we live is unjust, corrupt, racist and sexist – that it exploits all working class people, Asian, African, Caribbean and White, its police force systematically criminalises our communities, in particular our young people and Black communities, and its immigration controls divide our families and send refugees back to torture and death.

The message is that a political and economic system which is rotten to its core cannot be reformed. It must be replaced by a system that puts people before profit and where equal opportunity is not an ineffective trendy accessory but a practical living reality.

Unlike many of the so called "revolutionary" Left wing groups, who have a negligible track record of practical work, we have worked consistently and successfully in support of those communities under attack. We have never placed short-term political gain before the interests of those we have defended and supported – compare this with the political opportunism that has resulted in the "parachuting" politics of those groups who fly in one day and are gone the next – indeed many individuals who were once supported by us now actively support us.

In the last few months a Central London branch of Resistance was formed, bringing together a small number of workers from the rail industry, housing, teaching, council and the building industry, as well as unemployed activists. Those involved have a long and proven track record in various struggles over many years. **We now need you to contact us if you need our support on any issue – racist attacks, police harassment, employment rights, housing problems, social security payments etc etc.**

*We are not asking for your practical support if we have not proven our practical support for you.* With a relatively small number of active members we have achieved more in terms of practical success than all the political groups on the Left put together, including the Labour Party (if the term Left wing is not a misnomer). Our work in Camden could be as successful as our work in Hackney – to achieve this, contact Resistance now.

All of our successes in Hackney can be repeated in Camden and in Central London – this is why we have decided to form a Camden and Central London branch of Resistance. To repeat the successes of the Colin Roach Centre contact the central London branch of Resistance *now* and join a movement that puts all our people before profit and all profit in the hands of all our people.

**Contact Resistance at the  
Colin Roach Centre, 56  
Clarence Road, E5 8SW or  
phone us on 0181 533 7111  
(or 0181 540 6280 for the  
central London branch.)**